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THE

CHRISTIAN COMFORTER.

A GIFT

FOR THE AFFLICTED AND BEREAVED.

BY HENRY BACON.

"Oh! Heaven hath balm for every wound it makes,
Healing the broken heart; it smites, but ne'er forsakes."

"Oh! bear your softest balm to those
Who fondly, vainly mourn the dead;
To them that world of peace disclose,
Where the bright soul is fled:
Where Love, immortal in his native clime,
Shall fear no pang from fate, no blight from time."

Hemans.

BOSTON:
ABEL TOMPKINS, 38 CORNHILL.
1848.

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PREFACE.

During the brief ministry of the author, he has deeply felt the need of such a volume as he has aimed to make the one here presented to the reader, that he might leave it with the afflicted heart, to distil in silence its comfort upon the soul. He has chosen rather to dwell upon those truths which are the elements of all true comfort, than to adapt the articles to particular cases of trial and grief. These truths are susceptible of infinitely various combinations, so that they may be adapted to meet the wants of every afflicted heart and raise up every drooping spirit; as we learned from an inspired teacher;—"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father

of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in *all* our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in *any* trouble, *by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*"

He has plead earnestly, in the course of these pages, for the cultivation of spiritual mindedness, by which a proper sympathy with divine things is begotten in the soul, believing, as he does, that thus only can the consolations of Christ be justly appreciated. And he hopes that however much some readers may differ from him in their views of christian doctrine, none will find cause to disapprove the spirit of the work.

It has been impossible for the author to give undivided attention to the work, but he has been compelled to prepare it amid the cares incident to the conducting of a periodical, and the duties of a stated ministry, which have prevented him from giving its various parts the finish he otherwise would have been able to give. However, he has written not for the eye of the critic, but

for the afflicted and bereaved. And he will rest satisfied, and thankful to God, if his work shall bear a blessing to such, quickening the power to meet and struggle with trial patiently, and by its soothing views of God, Death, and Eternity, wake the pulse of christian hope to healthier throbs, and the spiritual heart to more powerful action.—A few of the shorter pieces have before appeared in print, but have been rewritten.

HENRY BACON.

Marblehead, Oct. 1840.

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Many are the causes why a Comforter is needed. Such is the mingling of the earthy and heavenly, the gladdening and sorrowful, the hopes of good and the experience of evil, the loftiness of desire and the feebleness of execution, that we are continually exposed to be the subjects of grief. There are numerous springs of sorrow which we cannot control. The will cannot always preserve a mastery over our sensitive nature, however much it may be enlightened, or however great the spiritual strength within. There are and must be many avenues to pain and suffering we cannot guard, and a shadowy happiness is all that we can rationally expect in this life.

Yet it is in our power to furnish the mind with those conceptions of the Deity, of life, death, and eternity, that are given by delegated servants of the Highest, to enable us rightly to study the features of grief, and balance aright the good and ill of this existence. As is the mind, so will its thoughts be, sending out a spiritual light to cheer and soothe, or increasing the darkness; lifting the eye to that part of the heavens where the clouds are rosy and golden, like glad spirits in the upward course, or where all is veiled by mists and blackened masses. What mind wilt thou have, reader? A teachable, or unteachable one? Like him who bowed to the mystery of God, or those who charge the Infinite foolishly? Choose wisely, and if thou dost, thou canst find comfort every where and always; thy heart will become habituated to trust in the good and ultimate benefit of evil, and although the fig tree may not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine,—though the labor of the olive should fail, and the

fields should yield no meat; yet shalt thou rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of thy salvation. When thy spirit is sad, readily and wisely thou wilt ask—*Why* art thou cast down, O my soul? why art thou disquieted within me? The source of the sadness will be sought out, and the remedy be speedily suggested. If it arise from sickness, loss of wealth, misfortune, destruction of fondly cherished hopes, or bereavement whereby the beloved hath been borne away, the religion of our Lord will give thee consolation, and amid the multitude of thy thoughts, the comforts of God will delight thy soul.

Christianity—the Spirit of Truth, is the true Comforter. There is no condition of man to which it does not adapt itself in this character, and no event can occur which it cannot sanctify to a good end—to make man more spiritual, so that the doors of the soul may be easier opened for the entrance of messengers from above. Christianity is a Comforter,

1. Because it deepens our conviction of the existence of a wise and good Supreme Being. We are not aware as we should be, of the intimate connection of this great truth with our happiness. Shake our conviction in the existence of a Supreme Intelligence, and how many blessed assurances are swept away in a moment! Trials become the effects of chance, and soon on the tablet at the grave would be written—"Death is an eternal sleep!"—All the marks of divinity that are stamped on christianity—all the miracles of Jesus, are aids to strengthen our conviction in the existence and merciful Providence of God; and thus christianity is a comforter.

2. It reveals the most precious view of Pro dence. It gave what the world long needed the knowledge that the Deity is interested human affairs and mercifully regardeth all t creatures of his power. What sweeter revel tions of this could be given than the Comfort has given! Human thought, exercised to t utmost, cannot conceive more tender and touc ing ones. "The very hairs of your head are numbered!" said Jesus. Who else would ve ture to say so—to use in reference to the Majes of heaven such language? What comfort, ri and satisfying, dwells in those words—in t view they give us of the Providence of Go He indeed is mindful of man!

3. It gives the clearest assurances of divi mercy. These are wrapt up in the name Heavenly Father! As such, we can lift to hi the voice of prayer—"forgive us our sins!" an humbled, feel that nothing is too great or good expect from an Infinite Father. The spirit is h —he will care for it. Though betrayed a enslaved, there is but one owner of man. A upheld, as we ever must be, by his power, v cannot be—man can never be—beyond the rea of his mercy; for that power is a Father's pow and what is its glory but to benefit and bles All need the peculiar assurances of mercy th flow from the paternity of God, and all have co fort thus offered them in christianity.

4. It teaches the doctrine of a glorious Resu rection. All hope of a future life depends on resurrection from the dead. But we cannot fi comfort in the mere fact of a resurrection,— multiplied evidences that we shall live again; v

as deeply interested in the character of the
to be bestowed, and all comfort depends on
ether or not it will be in accordance with our
nest desires for individual and social good.
ere would be comfort in the thought that the
ling stone at the sepulchre will never be rolled
ay—that the sleeping tenant would know no
re of good or evil, rather than in the thought
t the risen spirit shall be miserable—destined
er to move in harmony with the order of
ven, or add a tone to celestial melodies.
eep on!' were a more comforting mandate
n 'Rise to misery!' But christianity does
teach us to fear the utterance of either. The
e of God will be marked on the second, as on
first birth. He hath made all things for him-
—not for death, sin, or misery. Man hath
acities to love him—they will be developed.
rnal perversion of great and lofty powers is
ossible under the government of a perfect
ng, who formed the mind for progress, and
heart to be expanded by ever increasing love.
a, verily, the issues of death are with the God
alvation.

Christianity in teaching us all this, gives com-
. But this is not all. The crowning excel-
ce of the christian hope is the anticipation of
union. The ties of this life are not dissolved,
every dictate of christianity teaches us that
y are strengthened and refined. The benevo-
t affections must be expanded; for when man
s into a new and beautiful country where the
rt is satisfied, and boundless good exists, he
s a strong desire to have his friends there.

His affections become young again—wondrously more active and enlarged than when he was in the land of deprivation and want. And O what must be our view of heaven if we do not feel that the influences there will give new strength and activity to every pure affection! There the departed learn more of the worth of the human heart, and the power of mind. They read clearer the divine mysteries of our being; and must desire more earnestly than they could on earth, the redemption of souls. A new fervor is given to all their aspirations after universal good, and every tender sensibility is quickened. They cannot forget us. They cannot blot out the loves of mortality, and write new names in their place. If they could, our love and reverence for them would be lessened—O how much!

What loftier idea can we have of the Divine benevolence than that in the future world is given to the immortal this expansion of love—this intercessory affection—this ardent waiting for the release from earthliness of the loved and dear! Would there not come a shadow—deep and dark—over the brightness of our thoughts of the God of Love, were we to believe that at death he blotted out the memories of long and dearly cherished loves—separated hearts forever, and permitted not a thought to rise up to the throne for their happiness? Is this a purification of memory—a refining of the inward being? or is it not denying to the blest immortals what is the beauty and glory of the risen Christ—the sensibility that can be touched with a sense of the infirmities of mortal man? If he could speak to the outward ear as when he taught on earth, he would tell us

love is immortal, and comfort the trembling heart. Then, O mourner, dost thou

"Ask for thy home? In solemn peace 't is lying,
Far o'er the deserts and the tombs away;
'T is where I, too, am loved with love undying,
And fond hearts wait my step—But where are they?

Ask where the earth's departed have their dwelling;
Ask of the clouds, the stars, the trackless air.
I know it not, yet trust the whisper telling
Thy heart and mine, that love unchanged is there."

We must wait God's time for the opening of the book that shall interpret to us the mysteries of this life and of death. We know in part—with that part we must be satisfied now; for "the secret things are with God, but those which are revealed are for us and our children." "He hath made all things beautiful in his time;" his time is the best of times, and when the time shall come for the unfolding of the leaves of the now budding flower, we shall perceive, acknowledge, and joy in, the beauty of divine power and wisdom, the harmony of grace, and the perfection of redeeming love. "It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord."

THE JOY OF TRUST.

"Blessed is he that maketh the Lord his trust."
Psalm xl. 4.

While I was one evening conversing with a young friend, who possesses one of the richest and purest minds, we chanced to dwell on the mysteries of our present being, and the limited knowledge of even the most comprehending mind, and one remark was made by her that has furnished to me a theme for thought many times since. "I would not know every thing," said she, "for then I could not exercise trust." It is a remark that told me much of her idea of the Divinity, her reasons for confidence, and the blessedness of a filial trust.

Yes, there is joy in trust reposed in earthly love—in the feeling that forbids us to entertain the least thought of wrong, or injustice, being done to us by those we confide in. Love, free from jealousy, suspicion, or doubt. Full and free in its confidence as angels' can be. Unfaltering reliance on the pure goodness of every feeling and intention—every look, word, and action. How much it takes to make such a heart tremble in the least with doubt, or to raise in the mind a single questioning that implies it! Many may be the acts not understood, and the words uttered mysterious and strange, but the heart is

the same towards the doer and speaker. What a blessedness does the confiding one derive therefrom, carrying in the secrecy of the heart the sweetest thoughts and emotions, and trusting not even to her own lips to give utterance to the sanctities of her unshadowed trust. She feels rejoiced that there are trials of the purity and depth thereof, and that she can thereby prove how completely she has put her own heart into the breast of the other.

It is so with the Christian and his trust in God. There is such a blessedness in the exercise of his trust, that he is thankful, aye, *thankful*, for the mysteries of life. He knows in part—that part is enough to fix the deep affections of his nature on God, and he reposes trust in the good of the rest. He is thankful for the trial of his love thus given; and whatever comes—however mysteries gather and thicken, his heart is the same, beating healthily and strongly, sending the spiritual current of life and strength throughout the whole man. It is a blessed state of being indeed! A renewal of Eden in the soul—a continual upspringing in the heart of the delicious waters of everlasting life!

And why should we not trust—trust unwaveringly—trust in the deep darkness of the starless night, as when the sun floods down the noonday light? God is, as God was; and as God was, he will be. Look out on the stars, as now they shine out in their solemn magnificence. Think what power binds, upholds, and moves those worlds in brightness, harmony, and grace! That power is mindful of thee—the sacred word hath declared it, and on the holy page it is writ-

ten. For what is He mindful of thee? F thine own good. O do not dream that He w bend from the loftiness of love to ever make thi existence a curse. "One glance at the star said Walter Scott, "is enough to banish from t mind all low conceptions of the Deity." He sa right—he uttered the truth; and see to it, man, that thou readest amid "the poetry of he ven" the hymn of trust.

GOD IS UNCHANGEABLE.

THE whitest and tiniest lily leaf will cast shadow. Yea, more than this; there is not infinitesimal of matter that will not cast a shado yet God is without variableness, or even shad of turning. He is declared to be good unto a and as extending his tender mercies over all h works, and therefore what reason have we doubt his ever-continuing love?

PAIN AND SUFFERING.

"I would be wise
In even sorrow's lore;
'T will teach my spirit still to rise
On freer wings above the skies,
Where clouds can never soar."

S. C. E.

I SHALL not soon forget the thrill of pleasure I experienced when I met with the views of pain and suffering broached by a great mind, whose wisdom has been deservedly honored, and found them such as I had long cherished, and in which I have found comfort, causing other than tears of anguish to well up in the hour of suffering.

The views of pain and suffering to which I allude are those given in a sermon preached on the death of Dr. Follen by Dr. Channing.* They are such as honor God—acknowledge his supremacy and all-pervading goodness, and give the best comfort to humanity. Ere I produce them, I must remark that it is a poor philosophy that treats of God and makes any thing in the universe an accident—separating it from the design of the Deity, and that shrinks from meeting fully and direct the scripture—"I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil.

* See Christian Examiner for March, 1840.

I the Lord do all these things." Heaven's gate cannot be opened without casting a shadow. That shadow was as much the design of the Deity as the light within. Let it not startle us. Let us so read, understand, and feel that "God *is* love," as to be of those hearts who say—

> "Nought shall prevail against us, or disturb
> Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
> Is full of blessings."

Faith is weak where there is an effort to exaggerate the good and depreciate the evil of life. There is and there must be mystery. It is Faith's duty to submit. And let us not therefore cast a false light on life's contrasts in order to convince the sceptical mind, for we thereby lose the worth of the exercise of a stronger faith. Truth, let it startle or soothe, is always the best; for God speaks only through truth. Let us, with that humility of mind which is essential to the reception of true knowledge, give attention to the thoughts of the christian divine.

"Suffering," says our author, "fills a large place in the present system. It is not an accident, an exception to the course of nature, a 'strange work' exciting wonder as a prodigy, but it enters into every life, and may I not say enters largely into every life.—The truth cannot be hidden. Life is laid open to every eye, as well as known by every man's experience; and we do and must see that suffering, deep suffering, is one of the chief elements of our lot. It is not a slender, dark thread, winding now and then through a warp of dazzling brightness; but it is interwoven with the whole texture. Not that

suffering exceeds enjoyment; not that life, if viewed simply in reference to pleasure, is not a great good. But to every man it is a struggle. God intends that we shall suffer. It is sometimes said that he has created nothing for the purpose of giving pain, but that every contrivance in the animal system has good for its object. The teeth are made to prepare food for digestion, not to ache; the lungs to inhale the refreshing air, not to ripen the seeds of consumption. All this is true, and a beautiful illustration of kind purpose in the Creator. But it is also true, that every organ of the body, in consequence of the delicacy of its structure, and its susceptibility of influences from abroad, becomes an inlet of acute pain. It is a remarkable fact that we know the inward organs chiefly by the pain they have given. The science of anatomy has grown almost wholly out of the exposure of the frame to suffering; and what an amount of suffering springs from this source! A single nerve may thrill us with agony. Sleep, food, friends, books, all may be robbed of their power to interest, by the irritation of a little bunch of fibres, which the naked eye can hardly trace. After the study of ages, the science of medicine has not completed the catalogue of diseases; and how little can its ministrations avert their progress, or mitigate their pains! Undoubtedly this class of pains may be diminished by a wise self-restraint; but the body, inheriting disease from a long line of ancestors, and brought into conflicts with the mighty elements around it, must still be the seat of much suffering. These elements, how grand, how expressive of God's majesty and goodness,

yet how fearful! What avails the strength of the body against thunders, whirlwinds, fierce waves, and fiercer flames; against 'the pestilence which walketh in darkness,' or the silent exhalations which wasteth at noon-day? Thus pain comes from God's provisions for the animal frame; and how much comes from the spirit, and from the very powers and affections which make the glory of our nature! Our reason, how is it darkened by prejudice instilled in early years; how often is it called to decide amidst conflicting and nearly balanced arguments; how often does its light fail in the most critical moments of life! How do we suffer from wrong judgments which we had not the means to correct! How often does this high power sympathize with the suffering body, and, under nervous disease, sometimes undergo total eclipse! Then our love, the principle which thirsts, burns for companionship, sympathy, confidence, how often is it repelled by coldness, or wounded by neglect, or tortured by inconstancy! Sometimes its faith in virtue is shaken by the turpitude of those to whom it has given its trust. And when true love finds true requital, the uncertainty of life mixes trembling with its joy, and bereavement turns it into anguish. There are still deeper pains, those of conscience, especially when it wakes from long sleep, when it is startled by new revelation of slighted duties, of irreparable wrongs to man, of base unfaithfulness to God. The conscience! what misgivings, apprehensions, and piercing self-rebuke accompany its ministry, when it first enters on earnest warfare with temptation and passion! Thus suffering

comes to us through and from our whole nature. It cannot be winked out of sight. It cannot be thrust into a subordinate place in the picture of human life. It is the chief burden of history. It is the solemn theme of one of the highest departments of literature, the tragic drama. It gives to fictions their deep interest. It wails through much of our poetry. A large part of human vocations are intended to shut up some of its avenues. It has left traces on every human countenance, over which years have passed. It is to not a few the most vivid recollection of life."

Here is given us a vivid picture indeed of suffering in every department of life. We know it is true. Many of us have felt it. In every country there are diseases, and there are also provided in nature the appropriate remedies. Every where there are contrary elements at work. As in the human breast the heart is constantly at work repelling evil and advancing good, so throughout the universe. It is all of God. His work is perfect. We can see it but in some of the first stages of its progress, and while we are employed in its advancement, we must be like the embroiderers who see but the rough and unseemly surface. We shall in due time admire the Master's design.

I have said that this view of pain and suffering has comforted me. I repeat it, gratefully and humbly. I know also that it has comforted others. I am this moment carried in spirit to a well known room, where I frequently visited a sick and suffering Christian. Her active life was but one day, as it were, of devotion to life's

best ends, so uniform was her faithfulness. Long was she stricken with a fearful disease before she ever made it known. And then O what sufferings did she endure! Month after month of anguish was her lot, till it became year after year. Yet she murmured not. A smile of heavenly sweetness beamed through the manifest agony she was enduring, like a sunbeam stealing through the storm-agitated clouds; and when nature was too weak to repress the groan, the struggling effort to repress it was confessed by those near. What were the sufferings of a Socrates compared with hers! But during the years of severe pain, her child-like confidence in God was never shaken. Her language, in times of severe anguish, was—"I know not why I should suffer so, but it is my Heavenly Father's will, and that comforts me." Often, often she would remark, that the faith and trust that God had a good design in causing her to suffer, was her sweetest solace. Take that away, and despair would ensue. Meek-hearted saint! thou art free from struggling, and thy last prayer is answered—"I *must* go home—O let me go!"

This view of pain and suffering is the one best suited to the human mind. It permits us to connect the idea of a design of the Infinite Spirit with all pain and suffering. That design, thou, nor I, reader, cannot always fathom, or trace out in the least, yet I am willing—and my reason tells me it is just—to confide in the goodness thereof. What else can satisfy? What else can comfort? Let me feel there is a benevolent design of an Infinite Mind in all pain, and I can pray for patience to bear what comes.

Very justly has the author we have referred to remarked in regard to mistrust of God's goodness because of sufferings,—God's goodness "needs no advocate. It will take care of itself. In spite of clouds, men, who have eyes, believe in the sun, and none but the blind can question the Creator's goodness. Suffering has little to do towards creating a settled scepticism. The most sceptical men, the most insensible to God's goodness, the most prone to murmur, may be found among those who are laden above all others with the goods of life, whose cup overflows with prosperity, and who, by an abuse of prosperity, have become selfish, exacting, and all alive to inconveniences and privations. These are the cold-hearted and doubting. If I were to seek those, whose conviction of God's goodness is faintest and most easily disturbed, I should seek them in the palace sooner than in the hovel. I would go to the luxurious table, to the pillow of ease, to those among us who abound most to the self-exalting, self-worshipping, not to the depressed and forsaken. *The profoundest sense of God's goodness, which it has been my privilege to witness, I have seen in the countenance, and heard from the lips of the suffering.* I have found none to lean on God with such filial trust, as those whom he afflicted. I doubt indeed if true gratitude and true confidence ever spring up in the human soul, until it has suffered. A superficial, sentimental recognition of God's goodness may indeed be found among those who have only lived to enjoy. But deep, strong, earnest piety strikes root in the soil which has been broken and softened by calamity. Such, I be-

lieve, is the observation of every man who l
watched the progress of human character; s
therefore I say that I fear very little the in
ence of suffering in producing scepticism. S
virtuous minds are sometimes visited with p
plexities, with painful surprise; and in seas
of peculiar calamity, the question is asked w
reverence and still with anxiety, how it is t
so much suffering is experienced under a be
of perfect goodness; and such passing clouds
apt to darken us in earlier life, and in the ear
stages of christian character. On this accoun
is right to seek and communicate such expla
tions as may be granted us of the ways of Go

We may seek relief from many oppress
feelings by calmly surveying the real good
life—in estimating the sources of happiness,
pleasant emotion, thought, and feeling, and
remembering that beyond this life our high
and purest hopes shall become realized. Ha
ness is not but another name for dreams.
have known real enjoyment. We err often
our estimation of life's happiness, by fixing
attention upon only the uncommon, to the neg
of the every day enjoyments. "The happir
of life," said Coleridge, "is made up of min
fractions—the little, soon forgotten charities c
kiss, a smile, a kind look, a heartfelt complim
in the disguise of playful raillery, and the cou
less other infinitesimals of pleasurable thou
and genial feeling." These minute fractions
too seldom make account of, and are too ofter
would be the gardener who should make
account of the summer dews, that, silently
unperceived, add life and vigor to his plants,

be only thankful for the generous rains. The pleasures arising from the kind look, the cordial grasp and pressure of the hand, the casual meeting, the delightful smile, the jest, the anecdote, the song, the intellectual treat, the humble deed of charity, and the ten thousand other sources of little joys, make up the greater part of our sum of enjoyment. What a sum are the pleasurable sensations of gratified taste and appetite! What a sum springing from the very consciousness of life—the spontaneous feeling of joy that we are alive, as we break from the power of sleep—that we can see the light, hear the voices of human beings, and the hum of a moving world. Add to these the pleasure springing from the consciousness of possessing active powers—physical, intellectual, moral, and religious. What a theme is the circle of enjoyments peculiar to the exercise of each class! What a reflection to lift the heart in joy is in the thought that we are creatures of Progress! *Progress!* what thrilling ideas possess the reflecting mind at the sound of that word—rushing in like the sudden burst of the sun's light at day-break, filling the world with glory! We feel that it is a glorious thing that we have an inward power mightier than all outward—that it can speak and the world is changed.

Take the commonest words designative of the associations of life, and each will be a good text wherefrom to discourse to our own heart of the good of existence. What a clustering of joyous thoughts there is around Home, Love, Friendship, Society, Religion, Heaven, Christ, God! Vain, vain indeed the attempt to sketch an out-

line of life's sources of joy. Thought turned in upon the record of human experience, can discourse the best.

Turn again to the proper view of pain and suffering, and see how they minister to the development of inward and everlasting good. We listen to the voice of him we have before heard: —"Moral, spiritual excellence, that which we confide in and revere, is not, and from its nature cannot be an instinctive, irresistible feeling infused into us from abroad, and which may grow up amidst a life of indulgence and ease. It is in its very essence a free activity, an energy of the will, a deliberate preference of the right and the holy to all things, and a chosen, cheerful surrender of every thing to these. It grows brighter and stronger in proportion to the pains it bears, the difficulties it surmounts. Can we wonder that we suffer? Is not suffering the true school of a moral being? As administered by Providence, may it not be the most necessary portion of our lot?

"Had I time I might show how suffering ministers to human excellence; how it calls forth the magnanimous and sublime virtues, and at the same time nourishes the tenderest, sweetest sympathies of our nature; how it raises us to energy and to the consciousness of our powers, and at the same time infuses the meekest dependence on God; how it stimulates toil for the goods of this world, and at the same time weans us from it and lifts us above it. I might tell you how I have seen it admonishing the heedless, reproving the presumptuous, humbling the proud, rousing the sluggish, softening the insensible, awakening

the slumbering conscience, speaking of God to the ungrateful, infusing courage, and force, and faith, and unwavering hope of heaven. I do not then doubt God's beneficence on account of the sorrows and pains of life. I look without gloom on this suffering world. True, suffering abounds. The wail of the mourner comes to me from every region under heaven; from every human habitation, for death enters into all; from the ocean, where the groan of the dying mingles with the solemn roar of the waves; from the fierce flame, encircling, as an atmosphere or shroud, the beloved, the revered. Still, all these forms of suffering do not subdue my faith, for all are fitted to awaken the soul, and through all it might be glorified.

"I have read of holy men, who, in days of persecution, have been led to the stake, to pay the penalty of their uprightness, not in fierce and suddenly destroying flames, but in a slow fire; and, though one retracting word would have snatched them from death, they have chosen to be bound, and, amidst the protracted agonies of limb burning after limb, they have looked to God with unwavering faith and sought forgiveness for their enemies. What then are outward fires to the celestial flame within us? And can I feel as if God had ceased to love, as if man were forsaken of his Creator, because his body is scattered into ashes by the fire? It would seem as if God intended to disarm the most terrible events of their power to disturb our faith, by making them the occasion of the sublimest virtues.

"In shipwrecks we are furnished with some of the most remarkable examples that history

affords, of trust in God, of unconquerable energy, and of tender, self-sacrificing love, making the devouring ocean the most glorious spot on earth. A friend rescued from a wreck told me, that a company of pious Christians, who had been left in the sinking ship, were heard from the boat in which he had found safety, lifting up their voices, not in shrieks or moans, but in a joint hymn to God, thus awaiting, in a serene act of piety, the last swift-approaching hour. How much grander was that hymn than the ocean's roar! And what becomes of suffering, when thus awakening into an energy otherwise unknown, the highest sentiments of the soul? I can shed tears over human griefs; but thus viewed, they do not discourage me; they strengthen my faith in God."

But after all, ere we can be satisfied we must look beyond the little circle of this life. Here is not the all in all of human existence. Here the work of God is not complete. We must know of the risen Christ—the ascended Jesus—the active Intercessor—the all-successful Mediator—the "rest in love." We must know of Heaven. There is the reality of all that is here ideal good. There will be no room for doubt. There we must even now place our hearts if we would not be overwhelmed by life's mysteries. We may walk by faith, though we cannot by sight.

MARIA.

"Thy day without a cloud hath past,
And thou wert lovely to the last."

I WAS spending an hour amid the tombs of sacred Auburn, indulging the thoughts that were excited, and, as I looked on a familiar name carved in the marble or stone, experiencing what Ossian has called "the joy of grief." Sweet to the soul is such a place! Holy and soothing the influence of wandering in the shady paths, and yielding our sympathies to the calls of disappointed and afflicted affection. How different the inscriptions and how various the emotions excited in the reader! Here is one leading the mind to pay reverence to departed worth and think of heaven as the home of vanished excellence, and here is another that tells only of the grief of the living! Here rises an humble tablet, and there a huge and massive mausoleum, the one telling as eloquently as the other that the dead are remembered. It does not need a stately column, or lofty pile, to awaken deep thought and emotion while we pause at a grave. Simplicity can do as much as magnificence; for certain I am that I felt not so deeply at the splendid memento, as I did when I looked on a spot where art had done but little. Our admiration of human art takes from the mind its sympathy with the dead

and the sanctities of the grave. I paused at the sight of a little piece of marble lying on a green spot, and found that it marked the grave of a child. A sweet spot it was indeed! The size of the grave was marked by a slight elevation of the earth, on which the grass was thick and bright, and at the head lay a small piece of marble on which was sculptured the single name—*Maria!* Around the grave a narrow strip of earth was filled with lowly flowers, and fresh were they in the beauty of their bloom. How simple, and yet how touching! How quickly will the mind bring up the form beneath and clothe it in all the interest of childhood! *Maria!* is the only charm needed by the hearts who laid their treasure here; and that simple name was enough for them to write, for who that knew her not would justly love her? The humble memorial has touched many hearts deeper and more lastingly than where wealth has lavishly poured out its treasures to encourage art to do its utmost. Maria! thy name has a home in many, many hearts who never knew thee and who know not thy history. Yet amid the soul's statuary, in the mind's chamber of imagery, thought and fancy have sculptured out a beautiful image as the likeness of thine! How slender and delicate its proportions! How sweet and touchingly amiable the expression of its face! How rife with all the charms of beauty clothing innocence! There it is the image of one who could not but be loved—whose mind was richly stored with the garnered fruits of study—whose heart was alive to every wish of love and every sensibility that makes generous and kind—and in whom day after day

unfolded new graces and ripened the more the budded virtues. What clustering hopes hung around that form! What fond expectations gladdened the parent's heart as the mind dwelt on what Maria was and might become! How sad the hour when they began to depart and give entrance to fears! How dark the home when she was numbered with the beautiful dead! What grief pervaded the thoughts of the living who followed here the beloved, and how full the heart that could only utter the endeared name!

Reader! has a Maria been taken from thine embrace? Hast thou nursed a tender flower and seen it fade just as hope was promising a healthy and lasting unfolding of beauty and grace? I pity thee! I would weep with thee, and we would talk together were we near. I have seen the young die, though not in my own home, and felt the pressure on the brain and heart when the fatal word was spoken. But when the last that mortal can do for mortal was done, I did not tremble at the thought that our love would live no more, for I felt it was not a thought of truth. I told my own heart and my heart bade me tell others, that eternity will restore the vanished beauty of time, and to our embrace will come again the beloved, when God shall kindly take us to them.

When I see such an one depart, the thought is always powerful that the mind could not unfold itself fast enough in a mortal frame, and God took it therefrom to give it a better. I feel more than ever that the doctrine of immortality is truth, when I stand by the youthful and amiable dead. What a waste of mind would there otherwise be!

Where, throughout the universe, is the thing analogous to such a waste? No While the child lived and we watched his progress, we could not but expect time t advances and clothe our love in superior lences. In eternity let us repose the tr placed in time, and regard the departed angel indeed—her memory as one link chain of sympathies that connects the mir things heavenly.

TWILIGHT THOUGHTS.

The shades of twilight deepen and th steal gently out. I sit and gaze on the feel my pain stilled and my feverish pulse ing its heavy and quick throbbings, as t increases, for I look as on the eyes of whose glances answer those around whi gloom of closing life is gathering. These shades are God's ordaining. The gentl are his. The first gather and the others because he loveth us. That love draws tl tain of death to shade the earth's light fr weary eye of suffering mortal, and angel wait the time to come forth and soothe wi nal rest in heaven, the wearied one. Thu pers the angel of the twilight.

IMAGINATION AND GRIEF.

Among the lessons of our Master concerning an indiscreet and hurtful anxiety, he taught that "sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." By this I understand him as saying that "every day has trouble enough of its own, without borrowing trouble from the future by anticipation and distrust." How many heighten and greatly increase the grief of a calamitous event, or of a disarrangement of their prospects in the outer world, by imaginary fears and uncontrolled fancy!

It is a sacred duty to control, by an enlightened reason, our imagination in seasons of affliction. Neglect of this will cause us to lessen in our estimation the worth of blessings spared to us, to increase the mysteries of our lot, and to be unmindful of the sources of strength and comfort opened to us by the mercy of our heavenly Father. The imagination should not run away with the judgment, but be made a co-worker with religion—a spiritual artist to picture forth in illumined colors the divine beauties of christian faith and hope. It can portray before our mental vision, on the tablet of thought, things beyond as well as in the grave, and robe the departed in the freshness and beauty of immortal youth, as in the pale shroud and the gloom of death. Then, sorrowing mortal! whatever may be the cause of thy grief, look forward to a better

world than the visible, and anticipate the clearer expressions of thy Maker's love. Let that hope wean thee from sin, from murmurings and despair, and encourage thee to do thy duty, and trust in the good issues of all present evils. Strength will come for trial, through the consciousness of well-doing, and sorrow shall be a wise teacher of good.

NIGHT AND DEATH.

Some have regarded the institution of death as an evil, and an argument against the perfect wisdom of God, because it is surrounded with mystery, and as it exerts its power man is enveloped in gloom. Such should ask—Is death a dark thing to God? They cannot say it is, and why should it be looked upon as an evil in connection with the divine government, if its issues are under the control of Him who ordained the institution, and ordained it in his wisdom? Death comes upon the unenlightened man as night came over Adam. Darkness and mystery. But was there aught but goodness in the ordination? No. How differently night comes to the enlightened Christian philosopher! He knows and confesses the wisdom of the divine arrangement. He rejoices in it. Christianity gives the same knowledge in reference to death. Let us seek and rejoice in that knowledge, so that in hope of the joy of the succeeding day, we may lie down in quietness to the slumber of death's night.

CONNECTION BETWEEN THE DUTIES AND COMFORTS OF RELIGION.

"Let fear and love, most holy God!
Possess this soul of mine;
Then shall I serve thee as I ought,
And taste thy joys divine."

THE eye must be anointed ere it can look on the glories of heaven; and the heart must be in love with the pure, ere it can be able rightly to appreciate things pure. This important truth, according with the general law of mental sympathy, is too little regarded, and thereby one of the essential requisites to the right appreciation and enjoyment of the comforts of the gospel is neglected. To this I would ask attention while I aim to show that the duties and comforts of our religion are intimately connected, and that if we would enjoy the consolations spoken of as so abundant, we must conduct ourselves as those who live in continual reverence of the Divine character and government.

This is surely a subject of deep and solemn import, worthy of our serious, deliberate, and continued attention, leading us to consider our spiritual nature, the foundations of religion therein, and how we are wisely constituted for obedience and enjoyment as disciples of the Son of God.

This subject has a peculiar importance becaus of the enthusiastic manner in which christianity is spoken of as a Comforter by the primitiv believers and faithful, and because of our nee to have experience of the reality of this truth that we also may say, we are comforted in al tribulation and consoled in every time of trouble That such may be our testimony, if we will em brace the appropriate means, the sacred record of our faith abundantly assert and maintain; an therefore, as rational beings, as lovers of happi ness, we should consider these means, that w may understand the essentials to the possessio of the indwelling comforter.

1. That there is an intimate connection be tween the duties and comforts of religion is evi dent from the fact that we are required to obe the enjoined duties, and the comforts of religio are always presented as a grand persuasive t obedience. Hence we find these often connecte in scripture—that the obedient find in times o depression satisfaction in looking back upon th past, and what they have clung to in times o prosperity as the better part even then, comes t their aid and support when other props are take away. When the irreligious are prostrated b ill fortune or a calamity, they cannot retire int themselves for comfort—to the upspringing o pious thought and grateful feeling that so lon the lost outer good remained, but are forced t seek for comfort where before they sought fc pleasure—in the world, where the remembranc of God is not.

In times of calamity and grief, the mind is n capable of the thought, study, and reflectio

needed to give the soul a true and heavenly comforter; for such a comforter is wanted in the very hour of the trial—when the hand of affliction comes upon the unfortunate with crushing weight, so that with the consciousness of trial may also come the consciousness of the energy to bear it. This is the reason why the comforts of christianity are compared to the ever rising and ample waters of a living spring, continually supplying fresh streams to invigorate, refresh, and strengthen. This was a figure whose full truth our Savior knew by experience. His love towards the Father, and consequent trust in the righteousness of all his doings, caused him to know that an ever full, ample, and rich fountain of consolation was opened in his soul, and as trial and sorrow came, comforts sprung up within from the sanctuary of thought and memory, and the trial was thereby robbed of half its grieving power, and sorrow was deprived of its sting.

Men would fain have the comforts, without performing the duties of religion, and have in vain sought to bring this about. It cannot be; for it is obedience to duties that produces the religious experience which opens in the soul the comforts of religion—that cherishes a remembrance of God and the imperishable things of the spiritual being and the eternal state; while worldliness—a disregard of the requirements of heavenly wisdom, keeps away this remembrance, and instead of experience teaching that to be spiritually minded is life and peace, it teaches that to be carnally or sensually minded is death, —death to the finer sensibilities of our nature, by which the happy invisible is enjoyed when dark-

ness and gloom rest upon the aspect of things.

Here lies one cause of the many contem remarks of unbelievers, by which the jo raptures of the soul rejoicing in faith are r as the enthusiasm of a credulous and f mind; they have never experienced the tions of such minds, the full and clear pers of the reality of the objects to which the given their affections, and not knowing re emotions, they class them with the vision garies of a distempered imagination. Th to be pitied, for they will not apply the means to correct their errors—they will verence and obey religion—and therefor cannot know her worth, as the christian transfer his consciousness of the reality spiritual and invisible to the mind of the lieving and scornful. The one imagines r to be but superstition, and ridicules the w religious emotions, feelings, and affection treats as idle talk the testimony of the b concerning the comforts of his faith; wh faithful know that experience has taugh the power and glory of religious trust, cannot be gainsayed or denied. Could w the language of the feelings, emotion thoughts of one faithful and true disciple sus, as he passes through trial after trial, grief after grief, and at length departs fro life through the valley of affliction, we have a better answer to the vagaries of in than was ever written. The unuttered tes to religion's worth, read in the soul by the is the best testimony—it cannot be unde

but by a kindred experience. He that is most faithful enjoys most the comforts of the Holy Spirit, and those comforts are grand incentives to continued faithfulness and progress; even as the practice of the artist increases the enjoyments of his vocation, and better fits him to overcome the trials to which his professional duties subject him.

Again;—Nothing is more detrimental to the soul's enjoyment of the comforts of religion than doubt in the mind, and there seems to be—there is—a natural affinity between guilt and superstitious fears, so that obedience to duty must be essential to the state of mind requisite to enjoy the comforts of religion. The benefits of holiness can be felt and known in the present, as well as in the distant future, and herein is an eloquent proof; for it is the peculiar privilege of the pure in heart to see God—to discern the evidences of his presence and providence all around us, and enjoy the same, as did our first parents ere, through guilt, they became afraid to meet their Maker. And is not this a great blessing attendant on a state of true holiness? bringing the soul into familiarity with the Deity, giving it that true moral sight by which his attributes are rightly seen, and causing it to offer adoration and praise, unalloyed by those feelings of undefinable fear and dread that arise from the conceptions of the Deity formed by conscious guilt. There is doubt lingering in the soul when the guilty would draw comfort from the promises of God; the light of the mind has been dimmed so that it cannot clearly reveal the holy things of heaven, and the shadows of earth come between the

viewing eye and the stars. Thus it was with some of the primitive christians—they put away a good conscience and of their faith made shipwreck.

If we would rightly enjoy the truth of God's great love towards us, we must cherish a true sympathy for it, or with it; for love alone can rightly value love, or estimate the blessings of its exercise. And in this connection, the truth should never be forgotten, that to the full apprehension of some subjects a peculiar life is as essential as deep thought and research. The peculiar life of a painter gives a discerning eye for the beautiful, which mere thought and study upon rules and proportions could never have given; and as they who have little or no sympathy with an artist's taste and toils, cannot rightly appreciate his work, so to the sensual the beautiful pictures of religious hope and trust appear unattractive, so blinded is the moral eye. To him who has lived without thought of the highest relations of his being, the inward peace of the christian is unintelligible, the abiding assurance of a holy faith is a mystery, and no speech can convey an adequate idea of the reality and blessedness of being spiritually minded. And so long as men are constituted for the love and practice of holiness, and so long as guilt possesses a natural affinity with superstitious, imaginative fears, enshrouding the conceptions of the Deity with a terrific awe, so long there must be an intimate connection between the duties and comforts of our religion.

Again;—There is no truth clearer declared than that the more we reverence God and walk

in his fear, the more we shall love him; and the more we love, the greater will be our confidence in his goodness and promises; and as a consequence, the more spontaneous and abundant will be the comforts of religion in the soul. Reverence is "the root and offspring" of Love. We cannot love without we reverence, neither can we reverence without we love; therefore are we commanded to "honor all men," as well as to love all. And vain are all our professions of love toward God, if they are unaccompanied with a manifest disposition to reverence His name, character, and commands. In the same ratio that we love God, we shall walk in his fear; i. e. our conduct will be governed by the requirements of his will. According as we guide our conduct by the law of holiness, we shall have that spiritual understanding that can best discern spiritual things, and appreciate the grounds of all true comfort. Well therefore did an Apostle enjoin upon the disciples to commit the keeping of their souls to God *in well doing*, as unto a faithful Creator.

Again;—We should remember and feel that it is obedience to the duties of religion that begets in the soul that disposition which best fits it to take hold of and appreciate the evidences of a future and spiritual life. A celebrated mathematician was once prevailed upon by a friend to read "Paradise Lost," assured that he would see there the evidences of a mighty genius, and would be delighted with the beauty and sublimity of the poet's descriptions. He worried through it, and, fairly tired out, exclaimed, "I do not see that it proves any thing!" He went to it with a sym-

pathy only for his favorite study, and therefor was totally unfit to test the beauty and skill o the poem. So it is with many and the Bible They have not cultivated any sympathy fo things spiritual and heavenly—they have oftene cast their eyes down to the earth than up to th stars, and are as ill able to test the evidences o another and better life, as he who has had n relish for astronomy is able to appreciate th proofs of God's immensity in the rolling worlds Our Master taught this when he said, "If an man will do his (the Father's) will, he sha know of the doctrine." And to what will, let u enquire, did he refer? Undoubtedly to a wil revealed antecedent to the preaching of the king dom of heaven, for he speaks as if referring t what they already knew to be duty, and enjoine the application of that knowledge, or obedienc to it. This will, or rule of duty, we find clearl given us;—"He hath showed thee, O man, wha is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to wal humbly with thy God." Here is the will of th Father which we are enjoined to obey, in orde that we may have the right preparation of min to appreciate the evidences of the divinity o Christ's doctrine, and have, as a part of our con sciousness, the hopes that take hold on eterna things. The Savior, in the language quoted implied that the more men obeyed the will o God to do justly, to love mercy, and to wal humbly with him, the more they would be fitte to test the truth and worth of his divine, mos holy, and all comforting doctrine.

We can increase in power to take hold of th

glories of the future, to make to the mind's vision more clear the beauties of the heavenly home, and have more the felt reality in the soul. Our spiritual apprehension of the divine is an improvable power, and we know not what we do when we forget to give it constant exercise; for when we wish to have our eye clear to see the heavenly, our hearts may mourn bitterly that earthliness has dimmed its far reaching vision.

Let not the doctrine here laid down be misapprehended. Let not the reader mistake my meaning. In declaring and unfolding the truth that there is an intimate connection between obedience to the commands and the enjoyment of the comforts of the christian religion, I do by no means assert that all God's comforts are made dependent on obedience, or well doing; but I enforce the fact *that it is holiness that fits us the best to take hold of and appreciate them.* He who has kept pureness of heart—whose habitual feeling of love toward holiness is deep and strong, can appreciate the rewards of self-satisfaction, of inward quietude, and value them above all the outward advantages of wrong doing, as none others can; and he can appreciate the evidences of a spiritually blessed and eternal life, as others cannot. His moral vision is clear, and he sees comforts where the worldling cannot discern ought that is cheering. His heart is at rest with trust in God, and continuing to walk in the fear of the Lord, he continues to enjoy spiritual comfort, being fed with the meat the world knows not of, and drinking of the pure water of life. To the pure all things are pure; and it is sympathy with the purity of the Divine nature that

alone can give the power to rightly appreciate the comforts of christianity.

May we believe and act upon this great and solemn truth. Let us seek so to conduct ourselves, that whatever may be the judgment of men, we can have the witness in the heart that we have been faithful to the light of truth and duty. And what more powerful incitement do we need than to remember that conscience and memory make a part of our being? Mysterious is the power of memory! Stealing over the soul in the still hour of night, and opening the gates of the mind for the inrushing of thoughts of the Past! If they recal scenes of folly and unholy pleasure, deeds of deceit and cruelty, plans adverse to christian honesty and love, the question of the Apostle will be felt—"What fruit have ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed?" *What fruit!* bitter fruit indeed, of which conscience will make us partake, and the soul be made to sorrow with a grief too deep for tears. But if the thoughts of the past recal duties done, charities administered, kindnesses performed, and faithfulness to the better relations of our being, sweet will be the effects—the soul will find the food of delight, and the sunshine of the past will gild whatever dark clouds may hover over us. Such memories will be "songs in the night," and hang round on the darkness of our room beautiful thought-pictures to gladden and bless; meditation will be sweet, and the heart will never know of lonely hours, for the angels of goodness will be ever near, breathing rich music and bearing the spirit to the courts of heaven.

DEATH.

"Were this frail world our only rest,
Living or dying, none were blest."

WHAT is death? Whence came it? It is the putting off from the spirit its mortal habiliments, that it may be clothed in the vesture of angels. It came by the ordination of God, who designed that man should be a little lower ere he should be made equal with the angels. If this be true, wherefore do we cherish feelings of dread at the thoughts of death? And why is this not true? Who else but God could make man mortal? Who else can open the portals of eternity? Were death ordained by other than God our Father, we might doubt the perfect wisdom and goodness of its institution; and were eternity the habitation of other than the High and Holy One, we might question the happiness of its inhabitants. We read of man's days being appointed or fixed—a time of remaining on the earth determined; by whom was this ordered? By the Father, and him alone! It partakes of his paternity—it is the wisdom of his infinite mind operating as love dictated. Therefore we read,—"Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest Return, ye children of men." Return, Body, to the dust. Return, Spirit, to thy God. Destruction comes upon the tabernacle, but reaches not the spirit within. The shell crumbles, but the bird goes forth, a type of the young immortal.

An instinctive fear of death is inwrought in our constitution, because it is essential to the purposes of our existence here. But reason and religion are given us to control and subjugate to rationality this fear or dread, and hence the Savior said—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."

Let us consider this declaration, and it will teach us to rightly look upon death. For a moment let us pause on the negative;—our Lord did not mean that the death of the body should not take place to the true believer. And could this assurance be given, would it be a blessed thing? Would it be a blessing to never die to this world and its changes? To some it seems so. For myself, could I gather around me a little heaven, make the dearest objects of affection mine without 'passing away' being written on the brow of any, and release them from the accidents of this life,—I might deem it a blessing never to die; but to live and love, and see the objects of that love sickening and dying—to look back upon the pathway of the past, and see but at short distances the monuments of departed friends, and to feel conscious that they who are amid the living will not long be spared,—would indeed be a wretched state were it of endless continuance. Taking life as it is—O who would live alway? Mournful indeed to be ever here—away from the loved and lost, away from the sacred nearness to Christ and God not in this life to be enjoyed—away from the world of blessedness and peace, where angels dwell, where all are in harmony, and sickness, and sorrow, are not known; away, in short, from heaven and eternal bliss! O who

would wish thus to live on forever! still the tempted, still the sinful, still afar from the chief manifestations of the glory of the Deity, and from the home of the spirit where the beloved shall stay in our presence forever. That world is what we would have this to be to content us, and as there is no path to it but through the gate of death, leaning on the arm of him who died and rose, we would enter with thanksgiving. Death to the body must then be regarded as a wise ordination of our heavenly Father, and decreed because the mortal frame was not intended to be the eternal tabernacle of the spirit.

We come then to the teaching direct of our Lord. The Savior taught that the true believer would never enshroud death in garments of horror, as do those who are all their lifetime subject to bondage through fear of death, but would look upon death as a friend. He meant the same as is implied in death being abolished, its power destroyed, its being swallowed up in victory, i. e. by Christianity the province of death is seen to be connected with man's good, and the revealed glory of the future changes it from being an enemy to a kind messenger of God. According as man's vision is limited to this life, and his affections all centered here, he will regard death with horror—as unmixed evil. To such Christianity comes to lead on the vision to the scenes beyond the bounds of mortality, and win the affections towards the beauties and glories of that world to which Jesus arose; when those celestial scenes are clearly discerned, and those beauties and glories are rightly prized and loved, the horrors once associated with death depart—death as once seen is no longer be-

held—and whereas he once was deemed to be the 'king of terrors,' the tyrant to imprison in the dark dungeon, he is now the kind and gentle servant who unlocks the gate through which we enter to our home indeed—to those we loved and lost, and to life immortal

Thus has it been with the true believer. Many beautiful illustrations it has pleased God to give us; and in my mind the case of Stephen is always associated therewith. What a simple, but eloquent recital is that of the sacred historian concerning his death! He was surrounded with malicious enemies, with many demonstrations of active malice, and yet he could gaze up and see heaven opened—and there he saw the Lord Jesus, the rapture of whose smile was powerful enough to overcome the pain of the death-stones as they flew from the hands of his foes. And though he died amid showers of stones—a most awful death—yet the historian speaks of him as falling asleep! Beautiful thought! At rest in the calmness and beauty of that heaven he saw opened. And to the true believer, the approach of death is but as the visitation of sleep after a weary day. He can lie down willingly on the pillow on which his Lord hath lain, and trust that his waking will be to strength that will never fail, to brightness that will never fade, and to joys that know no shadows.

FAITH.

"Voice of vain boding! away, be still!
Strive not against the faith
That yet my bosom with light can fill,
Unquenched and undimm'd by death."

WHAT is christian Faith? It is the result of the direction given by revelation to those faculties by which we receive and confide in the reasonable and credible testimony of others, in matters beyond our own personal sight or experience. It is not a mysterious and undefinable feeling, but rational, active, and powerful conviction, by which the mind is possessed of the greatest and best truths. Every day we exercise faith of a certain character, and the same process of the mind brings religious faith. In both cases the reasoning powers must be employed; else we shall dignify credulity with the name of faith; for that man, or that religion, that makes demands on us for implicit belief—belief in which independent, calm, and thorough thought has no part, does but require us to be credulous. The sacred witnesses of heavenly truth treat man as a being of mind, gifted with an intellect he should use, reason which he should honor, and a power to investigate and decide for himself which he should not permit to remain inactive. They never cry down reason, for it is man's crown of glory,

though brightened and beautified by Christianity. It makes us capable of receiving and of appreciating the worth of a revelation from God. Let it be justly honored.

Christian faith has been defined as "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" or, as others have rendered it, it is such a firm persuasion, as gives, as it were, a substance, or present existence to the good things we hope for. This is the perfection of faith; for he that has such a confidence, or trust, or conviction, that he shall in due time receive the object of his hope as if he already possessed it, has perfect faith in the being from whom the good is to come.

Faith is the bodying forth of Hope. It makes distant good a present reality. It is to the christian what genius or imagination is to the artist—it bodies forth the pictures of the spiritual on which Hope delights to gaze, and thus brings before the mental eye a panorama of heavenly life and beauty. Truly hath it been said, that "Faith in a better than that which appears in the present, is no less required by art than by religion."

To make heaven more our home than the very sanctuary of childhood's joys—the scenes of life's holiest days, and the spot consecrated by the presence of our parents and the affection and fidelity of the beloved, is the province of true faith. This is has done—this it is doing—this it will do. For it has had and has all the power of Hope in union with it—as we read that it is the substance, or bodying forth, of things hoped for, and must therefore be in harmony with hope. In verity, then, Faith cannot embrace, as a final result, that which

repulsive to Hope. Is not this enfolded in what . Paul says of believing, that it enables the be- ver to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of ory? This seems to be the highest possible y—the most glorious rejoicing, and must there- re result from a faith embracing the greatest nceivable good of the universe.

Faith is the celestial telescope by which the r off world is brought near to the spiritual eye. hat a glorious world of light and loveliness! s we gaze, all is beautiful—all is joyous, and e catch the sight of the soft shadows of the iling garments

"Of forms that mortals may not see,
Too glorious for the eye to trace,
And, clad in peerless majesty,
Move with unutterable grace."

forms of horror and misery should mingle with e beautiful images thus presented, the soul's re- cing would not be full of glory; an aching void ast be felt, and the issues of faith would be un- tisfying. Here then is the true test. Chris- n Faith satisfies the most enlarged affection— e most expanded sympathy. We cannot hope yond its promises, no more than the soul can beyond the presence of the Omnipresent.

"One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists—one only—an assured belief,
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power,
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good."

HOPE.

"The holy instinct of the heart."

Among the multitude of evidences of the benevolence of our Heavenly Father, there is none to my mind more satisfying and fruitful in imparting rich and sweet thoughts, than that which is given in the fact that he has constituted man a creature of Hope. How easily could God have demonstrated ill will by reversing the character of the impelling principle, and instead of interweaving in the human constitution a tendency to hope, had inclined man to despair. What a reversion would this have been! Every mark that man was created for progress would be erased, and from him would be torn the loftiest aspirations of his nature. Man *is* a creature of Hope. From it has sprung the glory of humanity. It is hope's power to encourage and uphold, that has brought forth the apostles of the Right and Good in times when the might of darkness reigned. The divine within them never slumbered, but was always stirring and active, impelling them on to the glorious work of human elevation. And however much man may school his heart to be satisfied with a less sublime prospect than the final deliverance of all into holy liberty, divine Hope will rise at times and breathe out the prayer for universal liberation, and then the soul knows the

most affectionate fervor that ever visits it—even as the bird of light and liberty has more exultation when it is nearing and nearing the sun, than when its flight is limited to a range by man prescribed.

Put trust in this tendency of the soul—this "instinct of the heart." Therein are proofs enough that God is Love. Research should there be directed, and in himself man will find a thousand teachers of a better and holier life. Let him mark the deep truth of what an Apostle of Christ hath said, when he declared that though man was made subject to vanity—to be affected by the vain, deceitful and perishing things of time—this subjection is *in hope* of a deliverance that shall bring the spirit into the glorious liberty of angels—freedom from darkling doubt, from fear, from sensualism, and every earthly cleaving of the man. Man can never understand in the least the wisdom and goodness of his Maker in subjecting him to be affected by earth's vanities, till he feels and obeys divine hope within. The mere human languishes and desponds. Hope is the divinity to strengthen and encourage—to send out the stars when the sun disappears.

What an important element, then, in our being is this tendency to place the mind in the future—to draw light from thence to illumine the present, and stretch the vision to catch the tokens of the bursting through of the sunbeams to dispel the clouds and turn the rain drops into forms of light and beauty. In the strength of this what toils are cheerfully endured, what sufferings are patiently borne, what deprivations are unmurmuringly felt, and amid the griefs of a lonely and

gloomy chamber what beautiful images are called up, and what thick thronging fancies to delight come at the mind's bidding! So strong is this power that seldom does the heart despair; and even when called to mentally follow the deeply sinful to the throne of God, it cannot but look up in hope to meet a merciful and encouraging token that shall say all is not lost! God whispers in all this. He speaks of his love. He tells of the merciful provision in our nature by which we have inward strength to resist the otherwise overwhelming power of outward evil—adversity, pain, bereavement, and doctrines of error.

Christian hope spiritualizes the imagination, so that on wings of light it soars beyond every croaking bird and darkling cloud, and above the chambers of the sun, to where its light is not needed. This hope harmonizes with the perfections of God—his infinite goodness, wisdom and power. It satisfies the mind and heart, for the loftiest intellect cannot conceive of a sublimer prospect than it presents, and the most expanded affection cannot ask for a more extended good. God that constituted the human mind and heart has ordained that the one, and the other, should not be satisfied with a hope that limits any perfection of his nature. And as there is no bird that hath pinions to fly beyond the height of space, so the human heart cannot extend its desires or hope beyond the good which God hath provided for mankind. Rest in this truth, and hope shall comfort thee, like angel whisperings.

AIDS TO STABILITY OF FAITH.

"A faith all made of love and light,
Child-like, and therefore full of might."

STABILITY of faith is essential to a just appreciation of the comforts of christianity, and all through the records of our religion this truth is recognised and enforced. An Apostle of Christ speaks of it as "a good thing to have the heart established with grace," or thoroughly convinced of the truths of the Gospel and assured of their efficacy and power. And to whom is it not a good thing? Who has not so felt the mysteries of our present being and the need of a higher and purer life, as not to acknowledge the supreme worth of stability of faith—a faith "all love and light," and the very spirit of inward energy and peace?

I have no doubt but that some will look into this book who feel that could they but be established in the fervent belief of the universalian interpretations of christianity, they should be comforted indeed. I would fain aid such. I would speak to them here as I would were I at their side and favored with the privileges of a friend. I know that I have sympathy for their case, for I have seen the melancholy traces of wandering thought, as it has made the heart the home of many sorrows, clouding the light of the

present with dark forebodings concerning the future.

How, then, shall unstable and vacillating minds become established in the just principles of christian truth?

1. They should understand that no doctrine which wars against benevolence can be true. All God's works are harmonious, and he is Love. All that He designs, pursues, and executes, must be marked with this characteristic, whether perceived by us or not. This is the first letter of the Gospel alphabet—the first principle of christian truth. Here, first of all, the mind must be fixed and the heart thoroughly established. We cannot find rest elsewhere; for of God it is said—"He will rest in his love," and the mind of man, kindred to God, cannot rest in any other element. Love is the soul's element of life, joy, and activity. We, therefore, must not receive any doctrine which wars against benevolence, if we would find peace; for as there are implanted within us benevolent feelings—as upon the proper exercise of these depends in a great degree the happiness of our life, and as the great command is to cultivate them, it cannot be supposed that we can be settled and at rest while our minds lean to unmerciful doctrines; they come into the heart like envy, malice, and revenge, and stir up rebellion amid the affections and passions, and there is war within. Hence, we often hear of aged professors in partial doctrines having their "hope shaken;" hence also we have been told that some good and godly christians have embraced universalism because of the great benevolence of their dispositions, and unwittingly has thus a rich compliment been given to our

blessed faith by disbelievers. If here we are interested in the happiness of the betrayed and sinful, if here we are anxious for their rescue, can we contemplate with any mental peace, the time when we must throw away this interest and cease to desire their improvement? Benevolence demands and must have our faith. None other can satisfy the enlarged heart.

That no doctrine opposed to Benevolence is the truth of God, is evident from the wisest researches in nature; for the most profound students of the revelations of God in the material creation assure us, that wherever the skill and power of the Supreme are exhibited, there are also the traces of benevolence; and from the most astounding convulsions in the elemental world are drawn proofs of wise goodness in Him whose word is fulfilled by fire and hail, snow and vapor, and the stormy wind. Revelation must bear the same benevolent impress; and if there are eyes that see it not, it is because their vision is darkened. And there can be no settled, satisfying faith, till the mind is impressed, deeply and thoroughly, with the conviction, that the government and ultimate purposes of the Supreme are blended with eternal love—that God is good, and doeth good, and never ordains evil as an end, but proposes the best good not only of the whole intelligent creation, but of each individual, as one amid the mass.

Let a mind examine the scriptures candidly with reference to this point, and clear as the stars when revealed in their beauty and brightness, it will discover the perfect harmony of revelation with Nature's teachings. Let him write as a guide the glorious declaration "God is Love!"

and carry this before him in all his researches into the oracles of divine wisdom, conscious that whatever is of God cannot contradict his nature, and he will soon feel that he can be established in a faith emphatically *good*—a faith adapted to the expansiveness of the human heart.

But farther; they must not addict themselves to the practice of only giving their attention to sacred things when they are agitated by some startling occurrence. Many remain in uncertainty and perplexity from this cause alone, or chiefly. In the calm hour when the intellect is clear, and the judgment best fitted to perform its office, they permit other and less important matters to attract their attention, and give no thought to religious truth; but when a mysterious and calamitous providence occurs, when a good and amiable one is oppressed, and they are asking themselves *why* this should be? *then* the thoughts of God, Providence, and Eternity, rush into their minds, and they, affected, agitated, and well nigh overwhelmed, give their mind to the subject of religion as the great teacher—the solver of mystery,—and can find no satisfaction. Is it a marvel that they cannot? Are they fitted to investigate any subject of importance, much less the most important? No. They should take example from the wise student, who when perplexed so that he is all agitation, rises from his studies; when calmed, returns again, and finds much of his difficulty vanished. He that exiles from his mind all thoughts of religion, or spiritual things, till the hour when the soul feels troubled at the presence of fearful evils, finds in this incapacity to understand aright, the retribution—the wise punish-

ment of his neglect of the truth of heaven. Our calmest—best mental hours, should be given to religious truth; and if the mind is agitated when we draw nigh the scriptures for instruction, comfort, or hope, pause for prayer—let the soul go up to its Father, and in communion with his affectionate spirit, be calmed and quieted. Then we can open the word and read those truths which are for our comfort and strength.

Still farther; they should expect to find difficulties in the providence of God and in his word. Many make shipwreck on the rock of presumption. They would trace out the illimitable Spirit in all his goings forth among men; and, less fearful than Moses, would stand on Sinai and receive the law. But such rash footsteps are never permitted to enter the holy of holies, nor to cross scarcely the vestibule of the temple of truth. They will not put on the wedding garment, and they cannot therefore tarry to the marriage feast. He who goes forth to penetrate the depths of nature's stores must anticipate obstacles insurmountable, or he will be hasty in his search and rash in his conclusions; so with him who brings not humility to the study of religious truth, and who asks not only to know all that is revealed, but why more is not bestowed; not knowing that enough is given for a life's study and application.

Many do not seem to understand that it is given them to know the ultimate designs of the faithful God, but not to understand fully what means are best to promote the fulfilling of those designs; and they agitate their minds by wondering how certain operations of Providence can be reconciled with a benevolent and wise purpose, forget-

ting if there were no mysteries there would b
exercise for faith, and that it becomes

"Each sinful and erring child of dust,
To not wonder and murmur, but hope and trust."

In religious investigations, as in the study
the economy of nature, we must be content v
the knowledge of general principles, though th
may be particular cases to which we cannot tr
their application; for the philosopher may cle
understand the great laws of attraction and gr
tation, on which the harmony of worlds depe
and yet not be able to apply them to the eluci
tion of all phenomena connected therewith. T
profoundest student in the great school of
sciences, is sometimes baffled in the applicatio
all acknowledged principles—principles which
is thoroughly convinced are just and sound;
these difficulties do not shake his confidence
the general truths; for he knows that it is
always from the unusual and strange phenom
that knowledge is best gained concerning the
tablished laws of nature. So with Provide
and Revelation. If we would have as stron
conviction that God is wise and good in each
every dealing with us and all, as the philosop
has in the general uniformity of the laws of
ture, we must set aside the too restless and
reaching curiosity, and seek to know the gene
principles of the Divine government, without
pecting to trace out the whole chain of eve
that reach from an astounding occurrence to
throne of God.

And here it may be profitably remarked, t

as far as we can trace out deviations from general laws in nature, those deviations are most eloquently expressive of designed benevolence in God towards man. Take as illustrations the general laws that all bodies are expanded by heat and contracted by cold; and that all chemical substances combine in certain proportions, and in no others. Water is an exception to the first, and air to the other law. These laws are infringed just where the infringement was required by the constitution of man, and what can speak more eloquently of designed benevolence in the uncommon, as well as general operations of the Deity's wisdom!

And finally, they must be willing to study patiently in charity with all sects, and apply to their conduct what is plain and simple respecting duty and in which all unite. Some are ever unsettled because they will give *no continued* study to know what is right; but when they hear something more than usually forcible, they are thrown into a thinking mood; but may anon, by another wind of doctrine, be blown into another current; and so they are ever the sport of the winds. With many of this class, "manner is matter," and the same declaration of sentiments that from one would not affect them in the least, from another would agitate them greatly; because the one was like a summer zephyr in his manner, but the other was like a mighty rushing wind; and they give more attention to men than to principles. Such need more nerve, and to understand that application—persevering application is needed to insure knowledge of any kind. Were a person to propose to himself to understand a certain science,

it would avail but little for him to give an hour now to the study, and only recur to it at distant times, when by some discourse or circumstance his attention should be recalled to it. There must be more of the heart in the employment—more of the spirit of king Hezekiah, of whom it is written—"In every work that he began in the service of the house of God, and in the law, and in the commandments, to seek his God, *he did it with all his heart*, and prospered." Without this, the heart can never be firmly established in any principles so as to give the why and wherefore to every one that asks; for divine illumination comes only to him who earnestly and devoutly seeks, in the quietness of retirement, to know God and his truth, and who realizes that religious knowledge, like all other knowledge, is progressive; first the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear.

It is essential also, that the heart have in exercise true charity towards all sects, else truth may be shut out from the mind because it dwells where we can extend nothing but bitter prejudice. If we think that no good thing can come out of a despised Nazareth, we may be unwilling to admit the Savior though at our door, because he came from thence. The *truth*, should be our object. To gain it, we should be ready to exercise the freest and strongest powers of thought and reason. And to receive it, our heart should be ever open, and a warm place ready for its home.

One other requisition I must name, which is, the necessity of applying to the conduct what is plain and all-acknowledged. We must do the will of God, if we would, in the very depths of

consciousness, have stability of faith. And what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Jesus was conscious of the holiness and benevolence of his doctrine, or he never would have suggested such a test. He knew that the more the spiritual discernment was unclouded and strengthened, by practical justice, mercy, and humility, the more the wisdom and goodness of God in his religion would be seen and felt. Therefore, we may feel assured that the more we make justice, mercy, and humility, the controlling principles of life—thought, word, and action—the more we shall find that the doctrine of Christ harmonizes with right ideas of justice and mercy—makes them "twin sisters," one in spirit and action.

Thus I have briefly alluded to some, and I think sufficient, aids to stability of faith, when united with a deeply serious, thoughtful, and prayerful spirit. And who will not give himself to thus seek stability of faith? How great is the worth thereof! It is indeed the hidden treasure—the pearl of great price, and he is wise who yields much to gain it, and who, when it is gained, wears it aright.

THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG FRIEND.

"Dust, to its narrow house beneath!
Soul, to its place on high!
They that have seen thy look in death,
No more may fear to die."

The triumphal faith of our religion in the soul of the martyr has made his hour full of the revelations of man's power of endurance, caused the song of sacred hope to rise above the shouts of hatred and revenge, and made the foe to feel how weak is human effort when put forth to conquer the immortal, divinely illumined mind. Yet the sweet teachings of religion's worth and might are not best made known where crowds on crowds are met, with all the pomp of soldiery and arms, and the fierce array of the funeral pile of blazing fagots, to intimidate the professed disciple of the Lord of glory; for *there* is much to wake up pride, and to nerve the soul to brave and resist all that man can do, so that the death may be worthy of a record on the scroll of heroes. But the deep power of the holy and divine within is best seen when, in the quiet home, afar from the excitements that stir the passions, or wake ambition, the young are laid upon the bed of death, and while they have enjoyed life as greatly as any, and the most flattering prospects spread out before them, and

theirs all that the heart can wish or life need for joy, they by christian faith are made willing to leave all without a murmur—to depart without a single shade darkening the light of the countenance. That the aged should die peaceful, resigned, and full of hope, is natural, for they have seen much to win them from earth; the relatives and companions of their best years are gone, and they need rest; but with the young, just in the opening of life, the case is far different—they have every thing to make them cling to earth, to love the traces of God's goodness in the terrestrial beautiful, and desire to dwell amid the pleasant things of this world. The power of gospel faith is indeed most eloquently and beautifully exhibited when such, as in a moment, are prostrated, and whereas yesterday their hearts were full of hope and every thought was a type of gladness, to-day the decision is told them that they must soon die! How changed are all things! The glowing pictures of future earthly enjoyment, beautifully sketched by the imagination, and hung round in the chamber of imagery in the soul, all fade and disappear; and thought busy with the past does but recall hopes that are now vain, and anticipations which are never to be realized. The mind must look forward; and O how glorious is the power of faith when upon "the cloud curtain of the future" it can see brighter and lovelier pictures than ever flitted before the fancy as connected with this world—types of the celestial and heavenly—attracting and fixing the eye of the soul till the whole spiritual being is alive to the enduring things of eternity, and dead to the perishable and earthly.

It was so with one who was a very being of pleasantness. Dead! O no! there is no echo in my soul to that word as applied to her—she lives a bright and happy thing in the presence of my spirit, as she lives in the paradise of God. If ever a soul loved the beautiful of earth—drank in delight amid the lovely works of nature—heard music every where, and saw smiles on every thing which God had made in creation, she did. The cheerfulness of nature was a natural enjoyment to her, and a single flower had a magic to wake many happy thoughts, while it was made a type of the spiritual affections. She loved nature because she saw so much of her Maker's goodness there displayed, and to her it was a part of religion to admire and enjoy what he had made beautiful and pleasant. But nature's charms were not the most powerful to make her love earth—the greater magic was in the affections with which she was surrounded. Successful was she in drawing out the fulness of the best feelings of many hearts, for she was one of those gentle beings to whom it is a labor to frown, and who feel that the first and great duty of the human heart is to love and be kind. Hers was a devoted husband—an almost idolizing mother—brothers and sisters most fondly attached to her, and many ardent friends, while there was every thing else needed to enable her to enjoy life with her whole being. A babe was born. Health seemed returning to the happy mother. What glowing pictures passed before the fancy in those days of hope as she looked on that precious babe, and thought of what she hoped it would be to her and him! Brilliant dreams! Happy imaginings!—But how soon

came the change! The beating pulse gave fearful monitions, and they who are familiar with the workings of our mortal mechanism told the sad story that soon "the silver cord" of earthly life would be loosed; and the wheel within wheel of the mysterious combination would stop. O what a tale to tell such a young heart! It was told her—fully as she desired. But was there a shuddering of the frame—a shrinking away as from thought—an awful gloom of countenance? No! no! blessed be the God of faith and hope and heavenly love! "If it be God's will I am ready to die!" was the sentiment of her heart, for down deep there was religious—gospel trust, a holy confidence in the perfect love-wisdom of the Almighty's dealings.

In her last hours the triumphs of christian faith were most beautifully exhibited. Said she to her husband—"When I think of you—how lonely you will be, and of the babe, I cannot but desire to live; and then when I think of death, so beautiful is all beyond, and knowing you all will be there with me soon, I do long to go." O thou Spirit who whispereth to the young heart of thy love and heaven, glory to thy name for the blessedness and beauty that rejoiced the soul of that dear sister! The attractions of heaven were more powerful than earth's, and death had no terrors. Yea, the shades that gathered round the grave were to her but the shadows of the opening gates of the celestial city, and did but make more glorious the light she saw beyond, as she looked through in upon the forms of brightness and joy in the everlasting home. She did not see death—she saw nothing but angels and heaven, and not

a shadow dimmed her hope and trust in the reunions of the better land. While she spoke of the loveliness of the heaven she saw, her voice failed—her lips moved with inaudible words—her eyes were raised and her hands clasped as in prayer—and thus she died, with the smile of God lingering on her face. Happy in life—happy in death—happy in eternity!

To some who knew our departed sister in her days of hopeful health, the manner of her death seems somewhat strange, and why? Because she was ever so gay and pleasant they deemed she was not religious! How little do the world look on the heart—or rather how little able are they to see down into the depths of the spiritual being. Wherever she moved she moved in kindliness and charity with all, and her natural vivacity of spirits kept her ever in the cheerful, and much in the sportive mood,—and yet she was deemed too happy to be religious! Is religion a thing of the heart, that can be possessed without profession, and enjoyed in the secrecy of the soul's communion with God? or is its existence to be always judged of by certain outward marks, or manifestations of a peculiar kind of feelings and sentiments? Public professions, sanctified by the heart's purity or devotedness to the cause of Christ, are worthy of honor,—

"But the silent vow in the dell untrod,
And the bed-side prayer may be
As sweet a pledge, in the sight of God,
Of faith and purity,
As the minster vow at some ancient shrine,
Confirmed from the sacred bowl;
Our Father looks not on the outward sign,
But into the secret soul."

And looking there, we have a heartfelt assurance that our Father saw the reflected image of his love, and read the cherished trustfulness of true faith and hope amid her affections. Often in the sanctuary of her youth's home would she talk with her mother of the better and spiritual state, making the contrasts that could only be made by a deep and true love of the heavenly, and expressing her desire to die young—before the freshness of the spirit's impressions of God's love from the beautiful in nature should be worn off, or the world's changes had brought the sorrows which sink deep in the heart, lessening its buoyancy and romance. She loved to converse of the Redeemer and his truth, and thus gave many evidences of her familiarity with the principles of the divine faith, and their practical and devotional tendencies. And scarce ever did she write sentiments at any length, without giving evidence that one thought was ever the same with her—the thought of a heaven for all. The deep religious sentiment that pervaded many of her private letters and several published poems, shows that her heart was right toward God and heaven; the waters of holy affection ran pure and joyously like a stream hidden beneath the verdant vines, drooping branches, and the wild flowers that gain their life and brightness from the unseen and sweet waters. Death has no power to stop the flowings of such affections, and we joy in the trust that they still flow for us in heaven.

Sister! thou hast vanished from us,
Like a star of pleasant light,
That has sweetly shone upon us,
Waking many a vision bright.

Joyous were our hearts to greet thee,
For thou hadst a love for all;
And no more on earth to meet thee,
Makes, like rain, the tear drops fall.

But we know when stars are hidden
They are not the less in light,
And we know when God hath bidden
Thou wilt come before our sight;
Like those stars when clouds are banished,
Radiant 'mid the heavenly host,
We shall see thee, tho' now vanished,
And shall know thou art not lost.

A THOUGHT.

All who are in affliction should remember, that when the smiles of gladness and prosperity were upon them, when they were rejoicing in the sweet society of those whose departure they mourn, when life was full of enjoyments, they doubted not the goodness of the Almighty, for they felt they were basking in its rays; why then should we in hours of distress doubt his tenderness and love? Do we imagine that the high and holy God of the universe would bend from the loftiness of his character to vent anger upon one of his feeble children? Do we imagine that his nature is at any time changed, that he is not at all times, yea eternally, a God of love? To let such thoughts come into our breasts is reproaching the character of our heavenly Father, and denying what our calm and unbiassed reason taught us was true, that "the goodness of God endureth continually."

A BEAUTIFUL SENTIMENT.

"I cannot go
Where universal love smiles not around."

I HAVE been much pleased, and I hope profited, by the perusal of the Memoirs of Henry B. McLellan. There are many most beautiful sentiments embraced in his journal kept during a residence in Scotland, and tour through England, France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. A deep religious feeling pervades the whole, and the elevated, pious expression of his trust in, and submission to God, cannot but find a warm response in every devotional breast. I would transcribe one which to me conveys a great truth, and whose influence I have lately seen on one whose days are, probably, few upon the earth: "*All countries are my Father's lands, and in all countries still I am his child.*" The truth is even so. When we are borne across the bosom of the great deep, and tread the shores of the old world, the same Deity who smiled upon the paths of our childhood is there; the same mercy and truth that have followed us all the days of past life, will be with us there; and though we traverse the habitable globe, we do not doubt that He will still be with and bless us. Yea, all countries are *our* Father's lands; his watchful eye scans every part of the great universe, and wherever we wander he extends that goodness

over us which whispers to the spirit's ear that in all countries we are his children.

The sick and dying should remember this. There is enwrapped in these thoughts more comfort and assurance than human merit can give. When, as earth fades from our vision, we think over past life, we find little in the balance of merit, and we feel that, as Franklin wisely said "even the mixed, imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world, are rather from God's goodness than our merit; how much more the happiness of heaven!" It is the sweetest solace to think and to rest assured that the country to which we are hastening is our Father's land, and that there we shall still be his children. And why should we not feel thus assured? Why should the grave be regarded as separating us more from his love than the ocean that rolls its waves between us and the far-off land? God is unchangeable. In heaven and earth his government is the same. If over this existence is spread the wide banner of his love; if here all his dealings are characterized by paternal tenderness; if here he desires our happiness, why should we consider death as effecting a great change in his character towards us, and in his government over his creatures? In time and in eternity he is *The Same*, good unto all, and extending his tender mercies over all his works. Verily, "All countries *are* our Father's lands, and in all countries still *we* are his children."

Here is a beautiful moral to apply to our hearts—We are still his children. If this indeed be so, we should remember it. Wherever our lot may be cast, wherever God's providence may

lead us, we should cultivate the refined affections of the filial relation. Though we may dwell in the East or in the far West, in the cold North or in the sunny South, we are in our Father's land, and should obey him as dear children and walk in love.

AFFLICTIONS.

Afflictions, in the light of christian truth, wear a heavenly look—there is goodness in them—they are parts of a wise discipline to fit us for life's most important duties—to teach us human frailty, the worth of sympathy and love, the value of the hope of heaven; they are to wean us from things that disturb our virtue, that pollute the mysterious springs of the soul, and that tempt us to forget the high calls of duty. It is one of the blest teachings of our religion to bid us thus look on life's afflictions, and make them the ministries of God for our good, "who smites to heal, who wounds to bless."

RECOGNITION AND RE-UNION OF FRIENDS IN THE FUTURE STATE.

"Death never separates—the golden wires
That ever trembled to loved names before,
Will vibrate still, though every form expires,
And those we love we look upon no more.

No more indeed in sorrow and in pain.—
But even memory's need ere long will cease,
For we shall join the lost of love again,
In endless bands, and in eternal peace."

If a friend has departed from our home to a distant land, it is rich comfort to have the assurance of his safe arrival there, and that he is realizing the good of a happy exchange. It is sweet also to be told of the country he now inhabits—of its attractions, its superior enjoyments, its pre-eminent advantages for improvement, and the noble character of its inhabitants. Every voice that comes from thence is eagerly listened to, and we learn to love the country because of its beauty and its being the home of our love.

A deeper interest is given to all this when we realize that we are soon to be conveyed to that country, and are to become not mere transient visitors, but perpetual inhabitants. We bring in contrast our present situation, all its charms and endearments, with what is presented concerning that distant land, and the heart is quieted and

made willing to leave and lose much by the prospect before the mind—the glory of the country, its being the home of dear loves, and the assurance that it will be the everlasting residence of all we may leave behind us when we depart to be here no more.

But is the heart satisfied with this? has it no fervent questionings yet to be answered? are the voices of all the affections stilled? We cannot say that we are satisfied with this limitation of our inquiries, for the heart will ask, if in that land of the blest it shall find, know, and enjoy its loves? The consciousness that they are there is not enough; that they are enjoying the same loveliness and bliss that we are, is not enough; we still ask to know, to meet, and to walk in light and in advancing glory with them. This is the deepest want love ever created. It makes the heart, whose devotion is passionate and whose affections are fervent, to exclaim—

"O I shall feel the sting of ceaseless pain,
If there I meet thy gentle presence not,
Nor hear the voice I love, nor read again
In thy serenest eyes the tender thought.

Will not thy own meek heart demand me there?
That heart whose fondest throbs to me were given?
My name on earth was ever in thy prayer,
Shall it be banished from thy tongue in heaven?

In meadows fann'd by heaven's life-breathing wind,
In the resplendence of that glorious sphere,
And larger movements of the unfettered mind,
Wilt thou forget the love that joined us here?"

I know we are told that "poetry proves nothing," but I cannot admit the truth of the

proverb. For how know we the existence of deep affections of hearts toward hearts but by expression, and what is expressed with deeper and truer fervency than the desire to meet our loves again? Go through the whole range of affection's poetry—from the wild idolatry of love to the most christianized devotion, and gleaming out from all, and giving a radiance to the whole, will be seen the passionate aspiring after a world of eternal re-union. With the vision of heaven, instinctively comes the idea of meeting again, and without this the sighings of poesy over the grave do not satisfy us—we wait to hear more from her lips of heaven, and the attentiveness of the ear to catch the least whispering of her voice is caused by the ardent hope to hear her sing—

"Ye shall meet in joy again!"

It is the breathing of this idea throughout elegiatic poetry that gives to it the spirit of comfort for the sorrowing and bereaved, and a soothing power in the time of bitter tears. Without it, the deepest want of the human heart, the intensest desires of the affections, cannot be satisfied; and there is a hungering and thirsting most grievous to bear. And does not this prove something? Does it not prove that the divine comforter must speak of re-union? Did it not, the christian could never say of himself and the devoted, "We are comforted in all our tribulation," for the heart would have a tribulation for which there were no comfort. Here, then, we see the importance of our subject.

Look in upon yon group of mourners, where

the repressed sob and the heavy sigh tell of bitter grief. The dead is there, in all his solemn majesty and sacredness, and the aspect of the congregated multitude speaks of sorrow for departed worth. The christian minister enters amid the crowd, and the hushed stillness of the mass betokens an eagerness to hear his words of comfort. He tells them of Jesus—of the light he cast on man's destiny—of the reverence due the immortal mind, and bids them look on the body now lifeless near them, not as the all in all of the beloved, but as the time clothing of the spirit. 'It is not our friend,' saith he, 'that hath died. O no! He hath passed away from relations to matter he no longer needed and which we are to commit to the grave. The operative and indwelling Mind was properly our friend. That can never die. It has done away with its mortal body because it was imperfect and unfitted for the freest development of immortal powers. Mourn not then for the release of the spirit. But a little while have we lost his society, for shortly we shall regain it with infinite advantage. Let this moderate your grief—give a brightness to your dark tears, and, in humble hope to meet again, wait the deliverance that God shall effect for you, when the lost shall be restored, and the joy of meeting shall make us thankful for the parting.'

Thus speaks the son of consolation, and his words are the breath of life to the mourning, while he leads them to trust that all things are ordered by infinite wisdom and goodness, and that with the God of love are the issues of death. And is not the idea of re-union that which gives

power to the whole? Is there no real meaning in it? I would fain believe that when the christian minister thus speaks, he utters God's truth. He cannot stop short of this and be all that the bleeding heart desires—he cannot meet the great want—he cannot satisfy the pleadings of ardent spiritual love. The cry of the spirits that bow around the dead in the sable robes of grief comes up to him through his own sympathies with the plea—

"Oh! in that future let us think
To hold each heart the heart that shares,
With them the immortal waters drink,
And soul in soul grow deathless theirs!"

To take away this thought is to give to death's farewell a bitterness, I pray God, reader, thou nor I may ever know. A whisper of doubt respecting the re-union of friends, when the cold lips are kissed for the last time, would bring a fearful, an agonizing shadow, over all the fondly cherished revelations of heaven's glory and blessedness. We ask our Father for a heaven, not amid a multitude of stranger forms, though beautiful beyond a poet's dream, but amid our loves, knowing and known, enjoying and enjoyed, devoted to and receiving the devotion of love. The instincts of our hearts teach us to trust that such a heaven he will grant us, and our blended voices shall adore and praise him.

"All is not over with earth's broken tie—
Where, where should spirits love, if not on high?"

I have heard and remember the frequent assertions that we should not speculate on this subject,

l I have no desire to, for there is but little, any satisfaction, in mere speculation. My akened reason desires only to take hold of ths and carry them out according to first prin-les of thought, and this is the course that will isfy.

And first I would remark, that the reason, to r mind, why so little is said directly in the iptures concerning the recognition and re-ion of friends in the future state is, because it naturally implied in all that is given to com-t the bereaved.—Here I ask, is the comfort of scriptures adapted to selfish or social beings? iere cannot be any question in reference to it matter, as from the beginning to the end ristianity recognises our social nature and apts thereto the principles of faith, hope, love, d duty. It would refine and spiritualize the ections, so that where they are peculiarly ced, they may be placed forever. And when e spiritual love hath its human objects, and y are taken away by death, does christianity e the fulness of comfort, or does it not? There no comfort in the thought of eternal separa-n; and there seems to be but the mockery of e's fidelity in the idea that congenial spirits ll exist and yet never know each other in the ure world. The burthen of love's sorrow over dead is, that the society of the beloved is en away, that they are in its presence no re. Does not christian hope meet this sor-v? If it does, it must intimate re-union. at idea alone can give the peculiar comfort ded, and if christianity does not teach it, it is icient in, at least, one important and essential

attribute of a Comforter. I cannot understand how any one can read the christian consolations without supposing the fact of re-union; for they are based, not on an annihilation of our present being, but on the exaltation to a pure and immortal state of all that is spiritual within us. And it hath been well remarked—"What should we be in heaven if we did not recognise our friends? social as we are in all our virtues—having scarcely a feeling, even a blamable feeling, which regards only ourselves; members of each other; with all our recollections and interests, our very individuality, as it were, blended with the being of others? What consciousness should we have ourselves, deprived of the memory of those we have loved? or what could we enjoy, if, retaining their memory, we were separated from them forever?"

But to this part of the argument I shall return again, when I have referred the reader to the teachings of Jesus and his chosen.

Behold the great Teacher encountered by the Pharisees and causing them abashed speedily to retire. See the Sadducees approaching with an air of triumph. These deny the existence of angels and spirits, and reject the idea of a resurrection from the dead; asserting this life to be the all of life to man. They ask the Savior to answer a supposed difficulty, involved in the doctrine of the resurrection, and no doubt to them it was a witty query—"Master, Moses said, If a man die having no children, his brother shall marry his wife. Now there were with us seven brethren; and the first, when he married a wife, deceased, and having no issue, left his wife unto

brother; likewise the second also, and the
d, unto the seventh; and last of all the wo-
n died also; therefore in the resurrection
ose wife shall she be of the seven?" They
k for granted, as generally allowed, that in
resurrection taught by Jesus, the raised would
ain their identity, their consciousness of the
t and their memory of others; if so, they
ld not imagine how their question could be
swered, for they were sensual and knew no-
ng of the spiritual.
How did the Savior answer them? Did he
e the ground which some occupy, and assert
t in the future existence there would be no
sciousness of the present life? Did he assert
t all memory of the actions, connections, and
ctions of this state of being would be swept
ay and an entire blank only left? Did he
e a short method and tell the Sadducees that
the resurrection state the wife would not re-
mber her husbands, nor the husbands the wife?
he had thus answered them, the question
uld have been easily settled; and on the sup-
ition that he ever maintained such a doctrine,
re was no force or wit in the Sadducean ques-
n, and we cannot believe it would ever have
n put to him by those subtle speculators.
erefore, it must, I think, appear evident, that
the force and point of the artful query rested
the idea, that in the resurrection state, denied
the Sadducees and maintained by the Savior,
subjects of the resurrection would retain their
sonal identity, their consciousness of having
ed and acted here, and the memory of their
ial relations. Allowing this, the Sadducees'

question had some pith; deny this, and it was a simple and foolish one indeed. But the Savior did not waive the question—he met it. He undoubtedly saw the train of thought involved in the inquiry, and that the Sadducees reasoned somewhat thus with themselves,—If in the future world these husbands and this wife retain the consciousness of this existence and the ties that bound them here—if they recognise each other as on earth, will there not be partialities, jealousies and warring emotions, that must utterly destroy all peace and comfort?—It seemed to them, doubtless, a great mystery how any could talk of heaven as a state of pure peace and harmony, and yet admit that the redeemed retain their identity, their consciousness, and memory of this life.

There are many to whom the subject is as dark a mystery—many who are willing to admit the reality of the resurrection, but who will not admit that the raised retain their identity and memory of this life. Such cannot have the sweet hopes and anticipations so dear to the hearts of others. Their hope must be a selfish one. They may believe that the beloved parent, wife, child, brother, sister, or friend, will be raised also from the dead, but they will exist only as friends exist who have no knowledge of each other's existence. With such a belief, the parent who has bidden farewell to the beauteous flower of infancy—who sees the narrow shell encompass what she would fold with passionate fondness to her beating heart, has bidden it farewell forever. The sweet visions of her dreams in which that child is restored to her, are not the promises of the coming time of union, but the mockings of her parent tenderness and

faithful love. In heaven she may believe it exists, but not for her. Till she greets death herself she may love and cherish the memory of its beauty, but in the resurrection state she will not have even that to bless her. There her child may be by her side, and she not know it. There its voice may blend with hers in praise, and no deep and melting sweetness be in it by the memory of the past. She can no longer be a mother; she can no longer have a child; she can thank God only for herself—for her own being.

With such ideas would not heaven lose half of its attractions? There we trust are the loved and lost from earth. There we trust they remember and love us still. There we hope to meet them and twine with them the wreath of immortal gladness. What is heaven without our loves? what are our loves without the memories of the past? Strange songs from stranger lips, are not the songs of our homes from the lips of our kindred. We want hearts of love, to know where they beat, and to have them beat in harmony with the pulsations of our own, or there is for us no heaven—no ever-living love.

But let us return awhile to the answer of Jesus to the Sadducees. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven." Here is a most glorious passage, and thanks be to the Father that the words fell from the lips of the Son himself!—The Sadducees erred not only in denying the resurrection, but also in entertaining such gross ideas concerning the raised. Acquaintance with

"the power of God" clears up all mystery concerning the possibility of a resurrection and any change needed to perfect the spiritual—to disrobe the spirit of all that has retarded its free progress, or impeded the full and free exercise of love. "God hath raised up the Lord, and will also raise us up by his own power."

The sureness of the resurrection being established, let the character of the issue thereof be considered. And first, it should be remembered, that the Savior gives us to understand that there will be none of the select families, no marrying or giving in marriage, in the resurrection state; which idea leads us to infer, that there will be no cause to confine at any time our affections to a few and seek out their interests above those of others. "The children of the resurrection are as the angels of God in heaven." The language is peculiar and of peculiar emphasis. He does not say simply that they shall be as "the angels," but adds "of God," and more than this—"the angels of God in heaven." And what ideas do the scriptures give us of "the angels of God in heaven?" Do they not lead us to regard them as holy, harmonious, and happy beings? Our Savior when he commanded his disciples to pray for the perfect obedience of all on earth to the will of the great Supreme, worded thus the petition,—"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, *as it is in heaven.*" As, therefore, the will of God is done by the inhabitants of that celestial state, the pure and all-controlling spirit of divine love must be within them. Their element must be love—their very being love.

Let the seven husbands and one wife be transformed, by the indwelling of this spirit, into the likeness of the angels of God in heaven, and they can meet and recognise each other with a clear consciousness and memory of the past, without any other feelings than those that should exist and be maintained by brothers and sisters. Did the Sadducees know this, they would not have proposed the question they did propose to the Savior. They knew not the power of God to raise man to a state of spiritual purity and love, and they knew not aright the scriptures that set forth intimations of this change; therefore they erred, and imagined they could puzzle the Great Teacher with a question of easy solution. Had they listened aright to the Savior and learned his doctrine of the resurrection, they would have had faith in angels and spirits, and that the resurrection will transform mankind into the intellectual and moral likeness of angels.

The representations of heaven *as a social state*, deserve our attention. In the future world the spirit must have a distinct sphere of action, or it must associate with kindred spirits. It would not be an easy task to imagine how the first, or the solitary state of being, can be a happy one; while it is perfectly natural for us to associate pleasure with sociability; for such are the laws of the human mind, that man may be correctly called a creature of society—a social being. It is in the warmth of society where, like the leaves of the budding rose, his faculties and affections expand; and as the rose, while it yields its own fragrance, gathers the like from the odor of those around, so man gains pleasure in society while he imparts

joy to others. Heaven being then a social state, and we carrying with us our affections purified, it is reasonable to suppose that they will seek first those to whom they have here been given. The mother will seek her children, and the children the mother, though the manner, means, and communication between them, cannot be described.

Again I refer to the exhortations of scripture to comfort bereaved hearts, which imply recognition and re-union. All the comfort, based on the resurrection, that is imparted to mourning ones, who grieve for lost objects of love, takes for granted that they shall meet them as individuals, and be happy in their society. "Thy brother shall rise again!" cannot comfort the heart of a sorrowing sister, unless it implies, he shall rise again a brother—loved and enjoyed as in the past. That Mary and Martha would seek Lazarus in the resurrection, is reasonable, because they had known, loved, and enjoyed him better than others; he was identified with their very life—much that made life dear and pleasant passed away with him, and to them he was a portion of their spiritual and heavenly existence—a part of their inward being. Particular affection for those who have shared life's joys and sorrows with us—whose memories are interwoven with our consciousness, cannot prevent a generous, or any needed degree of affection for others in the future state. We here cherish especial regard for our near friends, and yet love the good every where. We embalm the memory of our loves, and we also embalm the memory of the virtuous who were strangers, save by fame; and hence the cherishing of especial affection for a favorite flower, will not be

inconsistent with a generous affection for those which throng around. We may love our own in particular when we are made inhabitants of heaven, and we may also love every child of the universal Father there assembled, with a generous and holy affection. Love to one has worked out love towards all even on earth, where the influences to draw out affection cannot approach to the power of light and knowledge in the future. Dante, describing the effects of his love for Beatrice, declared that "his ideas became elevated, his heart purified, his thoughts more sublime, more lofty, more inclined to virtue; that *when he beheld her he felt himself in charity with all mankind, and ready to forgive his greatest enemies.*" Love is an ever expanding flower, and its fragrance can fill the universe.

The idea of a resurrection disconnected from these associations, is but the hope of a new creation entire. Let us consider this. And first, the resurrection is to be such to each individual, and a little reflection will convince us that the hope of such a resurrection is the only one we can with joy entertain. It cannot afford us any consolation to receive the ideas of antiquity which taught, that at death the souls of men make a part of a great whole and know nothing of their former personality. Our memory, our affections, and our thoughts, here dwell upon persons as individuals, and our hopes of meeting them are directed to them as such; and our desire of a future existence, is a hope that we shall exist, feel, think, enjoy, and rejoice among others, possessing ourselves a distinct existence—an individuality—a

proper personality, let the body that clothes the redeemed spirit be what it may.

If the scriptures give the assurance—and who can deny that they do ?—of an individual resurrection, we must have a consciousness of our personal identity—we must know that we were the same person who existed here, and consequently must retain that one's memories. There is no other principle of identity. We must lose our identity, if we do not retain our memories, and it is our memories which inspire us with the desire to live again and greet our loves. Without our memory, the love of heaven must be an entire new created passion—our present being must be annihilated—we can ascribe no thanks for salvation, for the freed slave cannot thank his deliverer if he loses the memory of having been a slave.

Memory then must live, and if it does live we must be conscious of the acts we committed in the present life ;—remembering the acts, we must also recall those towards whom they were performed, and the exciting causes. If we remember actions and their causes, we must recall those who made our course what it was—who helped to mould our character, and whose influence affected all the springs of mental and moral effort. Then true it must be that we shall recall our former actions, associates, and loves ; and, as now, the holiest recollections rise above the rest, as we most delight in what was good and pure and lovely, and the soul leaps for its own, so will it be in the future.

But, says one, if we allow that memory will be retained by the inhabitants of heaven, we shall admit remorse there, and that will mar their hap-

piness. And if thou dost not, friend objector, allow all that is asked in the argument, how can the songs of redemption be sung? The glorious shout that woke from the multitude led by Moses had its soul in the memory of what they were delivered from; and the redeemed in heaven must remember they were once unwashed and wanderers, before they can ascribe glory and honor unto him that hath washed them in his own blood, and made them kings and priests unto God. Mar, or not, heaven's gladness, memory must live. Its worn characters will be made clear again. Its strange records will be brought into contrast with what God's grace hath wrought in the resurrection, and the fervor of our love and our thanksgiving will be derived therefrom. And therefrom also will be gained a grand impetus to inspire the soul with before unknown desires after progress, and stretch every power to seek good. Memory was active in the soul of the Apostle when he said—"By the grace of God I am what I am!" Memory made the contrast of the past with the present, and the issue awakened a deeper love and warmer zeal to glorify God in loving and laboring for man.

No man would commit a guilty action did he not think thereby to obtain some good, nor would any manifest an angry passion were there no cause to excite him. When, then, these erroneous views of happiness are removed, no cause existing to excite an evil disposition, and we are made conscious that what evil acts we committed were performed through ignorance, and the moral fitness of all God's requirements being made manifest, we shall have, we can have, no other feeling

than praise to God for our deliverance from evil—from vicious appetites and passions, clouding ignorance and false views of happiness. Then will there be glorying to him that loved us, and the union song of love and joy shall rise in a glorious shout to the Eternal throne, to Him who is Love.

When I read the record of the Transfiguration, I cannot but understand it as intimating that however glorious may be the heavenly change, it will not prevent the recognition of our friends. I see the same truth, also, in all that our Savior said to comfort his disciples in the prospect of his death; and I marvel not that it is said of Stephen that he saw Jesus surrounded with heavenly glory. In all that the Apostles taught of the blessedness of being with Christ, and seeing him in his glorified state, I read the same comfort. And when I realize that there is no thought that can contribute so much to our happiness, when we seek comfort in the contemplation of heaven, as the thought of eternal re-union, I cannot find the least reason to question its truth. So connected is it with all that is taught of the future state, that intimations are to me equal to positive declarations. I marvel not that assent to it has been almost as universal as belief in a future state. "The poets of Greece and Rome inculcated it; and some of the best men, and greatest philosophers, of those polished nations, both believed and taught it." The simplest people have cherished it, and it is a touching form of the same faith in the Indian to which Pope alluded when he wrote—

> "And thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
> His faithful dog shall bear him company."

"If nature teach thus, it is the God of nature that so instructs; if religion inculcate it, it is still the doctrine of God; it is the doctrine of Him who is the essence of goodness and the fountain of truth, who cannot deceive." Love has not every where been mocked, but has sung truth when its burthen hath been—

"But I shall come to thee! our souls' deep dreams,
Our pure affections have not gushed in vain;
Soon in one tide shall blend the severed streams,
The worn heart break its bonds—and death and pain
Be with the past!"

He that does not believe in the future retention of our present consciousness, does in fact believe in the annihilation of our present being, and the future is made as much a distinct existence as the present is from nonentity. But the scriptures teach, not annihilation, but a purification and exaltation of the man—the inward being—that which is distinct from the perishable material. This is what gives to pardoning grace, to salvation, to glorious liberty, a meaning, a deep and rapturous meaning. It implies a being that was, and that being purified, saved, and free. It tells of the past, and the consciousness thereof giving joy and glory to the present,—of memory going back and ranging through the earthy, and then the lifting of the soul in exultation that the heavenly is known,—of the sensual being contrasted with the spiritual,—the earthly house that was dissolved, compared with the eternal habitation,—and the remembered gloom and shadows of earth form a back ground to throw out into bold relief the glorious pictures of heaven. There was rap-

ture, deep thrilling and inexpressible, in the hearts of the redeemed Israelites when by their own beloved and holy streams they sung the songs of home, while memory was busy in uttering the consciousness of the past;—"By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down; yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion! How shall we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" A true picture of the captive soul in the strange land of the earthly. Here it is ever a pilgrim and a stranger seeking another country, even an heavenly; and the songs and music of the spirit cannot here be expressed, no more than the true artist, the sculptor, or the poet, can bring out to the sight of others the full beauty of the images of grace and loveliness in the soul. Much of the holy and beautiful that is felt, lives and dies unuttered in the soul. A resurrection shall visit it, and the re-union of pure and beautiful thoughts, hallowed affections, and rapturous visions of God, Christ, and Glory, shall then be made. Love shall repose in the arms of love, its eye look up into the answering eye, and a pure language—the language of truth and sympathy—shall give expression to what now exists in the soul but as the under current of the sea, having life, beauty, and sweetness, yet all unseen.

How are we bound then by the worth of a clear and fervent hope of eternal union and blessedness to study our spiritual nature, and its mirror—Christ and christianity! If we take to our hearts

human creeds, the farewells of earth will have an ever living echo of sadness; there will be sorrows that heaven, to our vision, will not deign to cure; and "we shall meet again" will tremble on our lips, as uncertainty shakes the nerves thereof. The mother, gathering her little flock around her in her last mortal hour, cannot speak of sure redemption—of unalterable Divine Love—of union in the land of light, and life, and glory. Some have taught us that in heaven the redeemed there will forget all the ties that bound them to the unsanctified, and will only remember the good. But what a heaven is that where the most amiable of all feelings are annihilated—those that make the pitying soul bend in mercy over the misguided and betrayed by sin! Jesus in heaven forgot not Saul of Tarsus—his enmity and bitter persecution of the faithful, and the renovating power he sent into his soul proved his affection for even "the chief of sinners." Christ is the true portrait of undying affection. And we are assured that he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; and if he is the sinner's Friend, the merciful High Priest, the perfect Example, then is it true—true as though God uttered it in every human ear—that true affection never dies.

"They sin who tell us love can die—
With life all other passions fly;
But this—a flame that ever burneth—
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth."

And it returns there not to die. No, no! nothing enters heaven to perish, or remain inactive; and the angels that stand with wings unfurled, hearkening to the voice of the Word, ready to fly on

the ministy of mercy, are bright types of t
ever-living, active love. Love in the earth ca
be comforted when the beloved die—and the
godly die beloved—unless faith can look bey
the grave and hope for the happiness of its
jects; and love in heaven cannot be happy ur
the objects of its love are happy too. David '
bleeding heart bending in grief over foolish
salom, is but a faint type of an immortal doo
to mourn over the eternal death of one belo
Change—great and mighty—must visit e
child of Adam after death ere the heaven of cl
tianity can be realized. The soul must be ba
in the waters of sanctification ere it can ope
eyes clear upon the ineffable glories of hea
and exercise its noble powers in the servic
angels. Who does not hope for such a char
He is not a christian that does not. With
best there are associated clouding weakne
from which they would be freed, and only
wondrous and God-directed change after the d
of the body, can they see light in his light! V
knows what change is effected by the very ac
the dissolution of the mortal body and the wal
of the spirit to the consciousness of a new l
In a moment—"in the twinkling of an eye
what changes are sometimes wrought! A po
is sent into the soul, that courses through ev
avenue of the mental being, and the man is c
pletely changed! Ages feel the effects of
ments. One touch on "the electric chain, wh
with we are darkly bound," vibrates through r
titudes. One truth discovered has changed
policies of nations—has reformed a univers
received philosophy, and in morals, as in nat

the smallest fact has produced the mightiest results. The sound of the tenderly breathed name of *mother* has sent a new feeling through the whole being of a desperado, as the voice of Jesus bade the blood, "with a delicious coolness," course through the frame of the leper, and a new life has been known.

> O if the magic of an earthly name
> Can wake such feeling in a long closed heart,
> Bid rushing memories so affect the soul—
> What is too much to hope for from the might
> Of the dear name of Heavenly Father! breathed
> By God's own voice of love into the soul,
> Amid the wakening powers—the rushing thoughts—
> The glorious light of his eternity!

The cooing of a dove, reminding of home and causing the contrast of the present with the past to be felt,—has changed the death-breathing pirate to the active friend of man. We know not what dove voices there may be to greet the soul's ear in the morning of that soul's Resurrection. There is enough of evidence to teach us that God has his own way and sufficient means to change when he will the hearts of his creatures. He can give a revelation of himself to man so as to turn the whole current of his being, sweeten every bitter stream in the soul, and make holy every thought. Would any limit God? They cannot if they would. He is illimitable in all the perfections of his nature, and the operations of his Will—the Will of Love.

To Death we ascribe no agency in the redemption. It is an enemy. It is to be conquered, and God is to be the victor. To the exercise of the

Father's love—the bringing of light into the
the right directing of the affections, and the
dom of the spirit from the clouding veils of
life,—we ascribe the glory of the mystic cha
Consciousness goes into the holiest of holies
God meets it there. How, we know not.
effects of the communion we may believe
be glorious. Angels know it—we shall kn
—humanity will know it; and God shall b
in all.

Mourner, be comforted. Look up from
to heaven. God has not changed, thou
change has come over the face of the bel
Shadows may shroud the light of thy home
the light of thy Father's love is never darke
Look up, and his smile shall change the fa
tear into a rainbow, and sorrow shall be the
binger of a brighter hope than ever gladdene
heart. Seek to know and appreciate, as
canst, his love, and in the multitude of
thoughts his comforts will delight thy soul.
flowers in our home-gardens bloom, fade, and
They soon become a part of the unseen. Sp
renews the face of the earth, and in new life
freshness our favorites come forth. Soon we
distinguish the most loved, though all are
sant to the sight. We renew the joys of the
We live over the sweetest days of memory
are happy. So will God preserve the life of
spirit of our friends—will clothe it with a
body, and he will give us, in due time, the p
to behold, know, and enjoy our friends. "
body that now is, is not that which shall
Here the body is tarnished by sin—its fresh
perishes by the blight of disease—its beau

spoiled by accidents—its strength fails by de-
y, and its honor is lost in the grave. But the
en spirit is clothed in a glorified, incorruptible
dy. We bear the one to the silent tomb, and,
th many tears, leave it to mingle with all nat-
al things; but the spiritual body which God
reth in the better land, is a part of the unalter-
le beauty and purity of Heaven. No sin shall
file, no accident shall mar its powers, no dis-
se shall torture, no blight shall come upon its
eliness, and death shall never touch it. Many
autiful forms flit before us, as we journey
ough life, entrancing our senses; there are in
earth, and in the visions of fancy, many
ages of exquisite loveliness, but the spiritual in
ven eclipses them all. There the face of
e will wear charms we never dreamed of
re, and the features we shall recognise as of
r relatives and friends, will wear beauties this
th cannot typify. Undying loveliness! Un-
anging glory! Imperishable goodness! Im-
rtal love!

"*Here* smiles must hide the breaking heart,
And cheerful words the mute despair;
Here friends must meet, and love, and part,
But not so *there!*

What though the loving heart is wrung
By chilling words of cold farewell?
And o'er its dying hopes is flung
Their echoing knell?

There we shall meet, *all* meet to love
With love that has no trembling fears,
In that dear home, far, far above
This land of tears."

Seek then, thou who lookest hereupon, seek holiness of heart; for it is active godliness that gives the best assurance of the best enjoyment of life, leading the soul to the purest springs of pleasure, and cultivating that disposition of heart —that heavenly-mindedness, which best fits us to take hold of and appreciate the evidences and revelations of the better life. We study where our sympathies are. We lay up knowledge of what we delight to pursue, and if our affections habitually go upward, our attention will be directed to what is adapted to make God, Christ Heaven, and the Departed, nearer and more distinct to us, and give to us visions, bright and blessed, of their glory.

A THOUGHT.

Every thing in nature that dies contributes to the existence or growth of something else; but what would the perishing mind, the death of intellect, contribute to sustain? what could perishing affections give birth to? Nothing; and the very lessons of nature accord with the voice of inspiration that declares immortality as connected with the mind and the affections, for they are of God, kindred with the angels, and cannot know death.

A LETTER ON THE DEATH OF A WIFE.

TO A MINISTER.

M——, July 1st, 1840.

My dear Brother;—Your home is darkened and the smile of the risen Jesus can alone illumine it. I trust that as soon as you shall recover from the numbness of the first shock of bereavement, your spiritual eye will greet the light of that smile, and your heart will be comforted. Why it should be ordered that your faithful partner should be taken from you just as the most exquisite and most desired enjoyments were budding, and when she seemed so essential to the well being of many, is not for finite man to answer. We must exercise our trust in God's wisdom and love, and find comfort in the thought that all is right, and that we in the fulness of times shall know it. How sweet this thought! How rational as associated with our doctrine! How worthy of God, and adapted to the comfort of man! May it feed your heart—strengthen and invigorate it with new life, and make you to be of good comfort. Earth's sorrows bring us nearer heaven; and every vanished good makes the mind to ask more earnestly for another and more perfect life, and brings the soul into closer sympathy with the evidences of God's unchanging love. You will find your experience teach-

ing the same lesson—the moral of sorrow. Earth's joys will be rightly estimated, and the spirit's whisperings of enduring things more distinctly heard and felt.

I know that your heart is in the ministry of salvation, and that if you can be made to realize high spiritual benefits resulting from your affliction in reference to a fitness for more extensive good, you will be aided to feel more that it is good for you that you have been afflicted. Let me, my brother, express what thought has suggested in this connexion, and what has comforted my own heart in seasons of grief, though I have not known a grief like yours.

You will think more of death, with your heart interested in the thoughts as it never was before, and love will be a kind interpreter of its mysteries. You will be better fitted to speak of the comforts of the gospel to the bereaved, for your own spirit will feel them. You can tell the desponding and comfortless what a fountain springs up in the desert of affliction when christian faith and hope touch the heart. You will speak of death and eternity with a softness and affectionate earnestness never felt by your people before, and of which you may be unconscious. You will now not only preach by language of the beauty and piety of christian resignation and patient waiting for the clearer light of divine love, but your example, and the spirit that will breathe in your conversation with the sick or sorrowing, will preach also to others to be reconciled to God. Ask of the Father to aid you *thus* to preach.

Do, my dear brother, do permit your mind to

dwell on these things. They will assume more spiritual loveliness as you yield to them deep and affectionate thought. They will not wear an aspect of sternness or repulsiveness, but appear as reasonable and kind persuasives to bid you drink more of the waters of life, that alone can quench grief. You will feel more that God's different dispensations in life are but so many religious lessons, to teach the worth of the spirit, the value of love, the richness of christian hope, and the necessity of a heaven. I trust it will be so with you. I pray it may be. And may our Heavenly Father, by the ministries of his love and truth, soothe and comfort your troubled spirit, and give you more of the enjoyment of that life which is hid with Christ in God.

Sir Walter Scott has well said—"Our hope, heavenly and earthly, is poorly anchored, if the cable parts upon the stream. I believe in God, who can change evil into good; and I am confident that what befalls us is always ultimately for the best." Can this be the breathing of aught but the confidence of the spirit of our faith?

OLD AGE.

"Old age is honorable; the spirit seems
Already on its flight to brighter worlds;
And that strange change which men miscal decay,
Is renovated life. The feeble voice
With which the soul attempts to speak its meanings,
Is like the sky-lark's note, heard faintest, when
Its wing soars highest; and those hoary signs,
Those white and reverend locks, seem like the snow
Upon an Alpine summit—only proving
How near it is to Heaven."

I HAVE just returned from a visit to one whose feet are on the last step in the descent of life. Eighty-three years have brought their good and evil to her, and memory can recall with distinctness the varied scenes of the past. Trial, deep and stern trial, she has known. Death has time after time taken away the beloved, till she has more in heaven, as she trusts, than on earth. She has not been fortune's favorite, but called to buffet with difficulty, and to labor with all the strength that could be summoned to her aid. And what has she learned from it all? To murmur and distrust? No, no; far from it. She has found her strength so proportioned to her day, and blessings springing up in the path of trial, that she has learned nothing but the lesson of christian trust. "He orders all things right for us," is her heart's tribute to God; and hers is the Psalmist's assurance, "Surely, mercy and goodness shall follow me all the days of my life."

spake of a friend's efforts to obtain for her a sion from the general government, as her band was in the service of his country during revolutionary war, but has but little hope obtaining it. "If I get it, I shall be glad," l she; "but if not, I shall be contented, for I get along. It matters not much if I can only e enough *to get home with.*" O what a hos was in the last remark to me! A little ger and I shall be home, where I shall have more wants! seemed to me to be her thoughts; so calm, so unaffectedly resigned was her ner, that I felt I was conversing with a true istian. Her meditations on eternal things are et indeed, for her heart has reposed a confit trust in the truth of the universality of Redemption these many years. She waits release in calmness, with no desire to hasten event, or wish to defer it to a distant time. r, very few of her youth's associates remain, the company of heaven is more desirable n earth's, and yet to her it would be a murring against God to desire to dictate herself time of transfer from this to the other home. it, when the time shall come, she may depart eace, is the sum of her desires. God grant as doubtless he will, for precious in his sight ne death of his saints!

Does the eye of an aged one rest on this page? me speak to thee of what I have learned n the aged, and be assured that however le thou art, thou canst yet be useful. I bow he wisdom of age, for I know experience eaching me, and not speculation. And here ne source of much usefulness; the aged can

teach of the satisfaction attendant on obedience and the disquietude of sinfulness, and the great lessons of their experience will afford the best teachings in behalf of prudence, uprightness, and devotion to life's best ends; thus the aged may be venerable for the experience and knowledge they have acquired, and pleasing and useful for what they can impart; impressing their hearers with the conviction that life's best happiness is intimately connected with fidelity to the highest endowments of our nature according to the gospel rule.

The aged may be useful in drawing out the gentle charities of the human heart, in developing the finer sensibilities of our nature, and the kindness and indulgence fostered towards them will better fit the hearts that exercise those feelings and sympathies to improve and enjoy life's blessings. When the days of active usefulness have passed, great may be the moral benefit bestowed on those with whom the disabled may have intercourse. Wordsworth has a beautiful poem on this subject, and shows the moral usefulness of one who had outlived all ties of consanguinity and was reduced to beggary. He describes him as known to all the region round, receiving from the villagers necessary provisions, and retiring in solitude to eat his food:

"And ever, scattered from his palsied hand,
That, still attempting to prevent the waste,
Was baffled still, the crumbs in little showers
Fell on the ground; and the small mountain birds,
Not venturing yet to peck their destined meal,
Approached within the length of half his staff."

The sauntering horseman does not throw his alms on the ground, but stops to safely lodge them in the old man's hat; and watches him with thoughtful glance after he has given rein to his horse. The tender at the toll-gate leaves her spinning wheel as she sees him coming, and lifts the latch for him to pass. The post-boy shouts to him as he drives along, and if thus warned the old man does not turn aside, the boy changes his course and gently passes him. Old, palsied, and feeble he is;—

"But deem not this man useless. Deem him not
A burthen of the earth. 'T is nature's law
That none, the meanest of created things,
The dullest or most noxious, should exist
Divorced from good—a spirit and pulse of good,
A life and soul, to every mode of being
Inseparably linked. While thus he creeps
From door to door, the villagers in him
Behold a record which together binds
Past deeds and offices of charity,
Else unremembered, and so keeps alive
The kindly mood in hearts."

The aged may also be useful in exemplifying the power of religion to subdue impatience and make the soul content with its lot. This was the feeling of the Psalmist when he said—"O God, thou hast taught me from my youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also, when I am old and gray-headed, O God forsake me not, until I have showed thy strength unto this generation and thy power to every one that is to come." He knew he could thus be greatly useful, and he has been even to our day, through the songs of his old age. Thus may

his declaration concerning some, be the case with all—"They shall bring forth fruit in old age. How much it is so with such as with one of whom it is said—"that as fruit grows mellow in ripening for the taste, so his old age grew kinder as it ripened for heaven;" or with those who verify the remark of an aged divine, when he himself was in "the sere and yellow leaf" of life—"Age has the same effect on a devout and benevolent heart, which time has on a beautiful painting; it softens every color, and mellows every tint."

Old age without religion, how sad and melancholy! I have seen it, and the perishing ruins of the classic fabrics of the lands of song and poetry could not wake such deep emotion; for what ruin is there like the ruin of all hope. How great the contrast with what is promised to those faithful to the monitions of the spiritual!—"Thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning." Give thy heart, thou aged one, to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—the God of a happy old age. Like Simeon, rejoice to embrace the Savior, and welcome the salvation of the great Israel. Search the scriptures, and thou shalt feel as did Sir Walter Scott in his last days, that "there is but *one* book"—and what a blessed one is that! Let decay come, and thine will be the poet's language—

"I feel that in my great weakness—Earth
Takes nothing from the armament within,
With which Faith girds us like a fortress. Here
The soul sits in its Kremlin—while the sound
And sight of human conflict dull and swim

On the palled senses. It but seems to grasp
With a renewed retention all that Hope
Paints brighter as we fail!"

THE CUP DRANK.

Why is it more sorrowful to bear disease and ain away from home and among strangers? t is because the presence of those we love takes way the bitterness of the trial, and we feel that hat they prepare for us must be for our good— re do no fear to receive it—we have no trem- lings of doubt—the hand of affection has pre- ared the bitter cup, and bitter though it be, we o not doubt its reference to our good. Who ath not known the power of love—

'to soothe grief,
Yea, to soften away its human pain;
By tenderness and care, the cup to temper
With words of consolation and sweet hope,
That even its very bitterness shall seem sweet,
Forgotten in the love that offers it."

; was so with our divine Master. A bitter cup as prepared for him—mortal lip was never made) taste a more bitter one, and he would have ırned away from it with a shrinking soul, had he ot recognised the hand that presented it; he aw it was his Father's, and his soul was calm; e could not shrink from what he had ordained; nd there is deep meaning in his words to Peter —"The cup which *my Father* hath given me, hall I not drink it?" Shall I doubt its goodness, nd deny my Father's wisdom? The cup was resented, and he drank it to the very dregs, and owed in pious submission. So it should be with s. Life has its bitter cup, and it is well.

THE BODY AND THE SPIRIT.

AN ANALOGICAL ILLUSTRATION.

Our bodies are a part of perishable nature No charm can exclude them from the commo fate. Death is written upon them, and the recor vanishes only with the fabric itself. Of this w have monitions every day, not simply throug our relation with those who are passing awa but as it respects our individual selves. W know that we have an earthly body, because w are dependent upon the produce of the earth fo its sustenance; and when for a short time w are not able to receive the needed supply, ou strength fails and we sicken. We cannot al ways expect to have the mysterious, but divinel wise, processes of waste and assimilation to g on as the health of the body requires; and ever hour of weakness, every time of weariness, ever attack of disease, reminds, or should remind, u of what the Creator has written on our frames– that the tabernacle of the flesh is not the spirit' everlasting temple. It is then we realize that

> "Our hearts, like muffled drums,
> Beat funeral marches to the grave."

The wheel will cease to go round at the cistern of life, and God only knows whose hand wil

first be palsied by the snapping in twain of the cord.

Thus are we taught to expect death, and to prepare for it. We live by death. Continual changes are going on in our animal being, and it must be that they will wear out at last the delicate mechanism of our mortal frame. Ourselves are passing away in those we love—we feel that much of our life is gone with them, and our feet do not rest so solid upon the earth as they once did—we think and feel more of heaven. It becomes us then to attempt to take a right view of our friends; to look upon the outward tabernacle as christianity teaches us, that we may recognise more the indwelling and undying spirit, and fix our love on *that*, so that we may feel its presence when the body has obeyed the mandate of its Creator, and has mouldered back to earth.

It is well to connect spiritual truths with the ever present universe, so that we can recall them when we stand in the city of the dead and give to the tomb the beloved form. To this end I would take as an illustration of the proper view of the human body, the following analogy,—*What the universe, as we behold it, is to the Spirit of all spirits, we should regard the body of a friend to be in reference to the indwelling spirit.*

1. The universe reveals the operating Spirit in a manner to attract our love. We know that all the arrangements, the adaptations, and beneficent results in nature, are the effects of a directing Will and governing Love. We do not regard this outward goodness as resulting from self-organized matter, but as the manifested power,

wisdom, and love of the hidden Spirit, who reveals himself for our love; and so the universe becomes the body of God—the "time-vesture of the Almighty!" So with the attractions of our friends—Mind is the life of them all. The body is the mind's servant, and that mind, directed in love towards us, will make the outer person to wear a loveliness that others may not discern, but to us most dear. According to our knowledge of the natural laws and of the character of the Governor of the universe, will be the moral or spiritual associations connected with nature. So with the human body; according as its powers have been directed by a kind and generous will, operating for our good, our hearts will be drawn out towards it, and the tabernacle will be loved for the inhabitant's sake. Thus we find beauties and excellences in our friends that others do not perceive, and we look on them—on even the outer form, with a partial eye, as the intense lover of nature sees every where harmonies in the universe, and dwells not on what others might deem defects. The light of love in the hearts of such shines out, casting a beautiful radiance on nature, bringing out into bolder relief its beauties, and tinging them with lovelier hues than those of the rainbow—the hues of illuminating mind; so the light of love in our hearts is reflected upon the forms of our friends, making them dear as none others are, even as the universe is more beautiful with our conceptions of the Invisible and Operating Spirit, than it could be with less elevated ideas of his character. Regarding him as the Universal Father, we look upon the stars, and no thought enters our mind,

hat amid their immensity there is an abode of nisery, but they are all to us "islands of the lest," in the upper sea; and as we gaze, our spirations after good are strengthened, and we eel the more that the heavens declare his glory, nd the firmament showeth forth his handy work —the glory and the work of Love. It is this ower of association that gives peculiar charms o certain places, that brings back the presence f the beloved there, that causes us to hear their choing step amid the rustling leaves of the arden, or in the sacred retreat of home, and laddens our hearts again with the sweet music f their voice and the songs of other days. It is his power of the mind that makes us feel "there s poetry in the harmonies of nature, in the gen- le influences of love and affliction, in the quiet roodings of the soul over the memories of early ears, and in the thoughts of glory that chain ur spirits to the gates of Paradise." It is this ower of the mind that gives all the rapture that prings from the christian hope of a resurrection —of everlasting life in heaven; for, as the poet 'ercival has it—

"We send our fond endearments o'er the grave;
Heaven would be hell if loved ones were not there."

2. The changes in the universe do not affect he nature and life of the Great Spirit. So with he human body and the spirit within. Revolu- ion and change are written on all the works of he Almighty in nature, from the humblest insect r flower to the magnificent worlds in space. Science has studied the stars and marked changes

in the planets that deck the brow of heaven with jewels—and it has missed from the crown of night some of the gems on which the eyes of the wise of other ages looked! Passing away is written on even the worlds in space, but the waves of change never reach up to the throne of God. The glories of the I AM never change He is the eternal Same. His love, and wisdom and power never alter; and though voice after voice may vanish from the sublime song of the rolling spheres, yet the perfection of Jehovah remains, and his word can make the eternal harmony complete—add, as wisdom dictates, to the choir of worlds, and open a new stop in the organ of the universe. Though we fear "the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds," we should never fear a change in the Spirit who spake and it was done—who said, Let light be! and light was! And so when thought makes us read clearer than before the law of change inwrought in our mortal constitution, and we feel the more that the earthly tenement of man *must* crumble and decay, we should not fear the death —the extinction—the annihilation of the spirit. It is of God and cannot die. The earthly house may fall—the natural body blend with the dust, but after that which is natural, or earthly, comes that which is spiritual, or heavenly. The soul shall put off mortality and put on immortality, because it shall put off corruption and put on incorruption. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. The one we have; by it we have enjoyed and suffered much; the other we shall have, and by it glorify God in blessedness. Why then should we not believe that as are the

universe and God, as body and spirit, so are the body and spirit of man—the spirit ever living, though part after part of the body perishes! Our bodies shall be exchanged for a likeness to the glorious body of Christ, and the spirit encased in the grovelling worm, shall be clothed upon with the vesture of angels, and be no longer of the earth earthy, but of heaven heavenly—like Moses and Elias on the mount with Christ.

3. We should not in our love of the universe forget the Spirit and his character. So with the human body and spirit within. If the presence of God, in the operations and effects of his will, were taken from the universe, its glory and beauty would depart. One spring of power touched, and chaos would reign. And that chaos would remain, and order would never return, till the spirit of God should move again upon the face of the waters. His power laid the foundations of the earth, bounded the seas, and stretched out the curtain of clouds above. His wisdom regulates the laws of nature's economy, and his energy sustains the worlds in harmony. With the grand work of genius, let the artist be remembered; and when our hearts thrill with delight as we view the glorious work of God, let us not forget him. An humble effort in the arts of one we know and love, is valued, because with the work we blend the spirit that created it; and so let it be—for so should it be—with us in respect to the universe, and always remember, "All nature is but an effect, whose cause is God." And shall we love the forms of our friends to the neglect of the spirit? Shall the earthly shroud the heavenly? Shall the fond mother bend over

her beautiful babe and feast on its loveliness—find her heaven in its face, studying the glances of its eyes as the astronomer does the stars, and its smiles as the naturalist does the splendid clouds of summer, and forget that her child is a spirit—its body but its earthly home? Many a mother has forgotten this, and when the spirit flew to its better home, their hearts have bled and no balm was near to heal the wounds. They had loved the eyes, but the light had fled; they had loved the smiles, but the sun had set; they had loved the lips, but their music was gone; and the little heart that once beat in gladness against their own—responsive melody—is now stilled. No art can wake those eyelids, bring back again the rosy smile, or tune the organs of speech to music again. In vain are now the endearments that were never vain before, and powerless all effort to move the pulse of life. The child is dead! O no, mother! the body is lifeless, but thy child lives, and God will give him to thee in his own time.

"Why seek the vanished bird
By the forsaken nest and broken shell?
Far thence he sings unheard,
Yet free and joyous in the woods to dwell."

The dew-drop that made thy flower so beautiful, is but exhaled to be enshrined in a still lovelier one, still thine own, and thou wilt know it in heaven.

Why is it, when our friends are covered with disease, and all outer beauty or attraction is vanished, that we cling to them, and pray God for strength to meet our duty? It is because the

spirit is remembered and loved. Thought goes back to other days, when the manifestations of that spirit won our love and admiration, and kindled a flame that has never waned. This memory makes the loathsome body to be not regarded as such. We think of our friend—of our chosen—his mind and affections, and the heart is faithful to duty to all that pertains to him. This is the secret of devoted love to the abandoned to sin and crime, in the wife and the mother. In them there is a divine instinct—"the instinct of the heart"—which makes them confident, that though now the image of God may be buried down deep under earthliness and sensuality, yet there is a power that can and will remove this burden, restore by mystic power the original brightness, and reset the diamond in the gold of heaven.

4. We are assured of brighter manifestations of the Great Spirit than the universe gives us, for in the presence of the sublimest revelations of God in nature, we must say, "Lo! these are but parts of his ways!" So of the spirit and the body. The glorious changes that were made the themes of prophecy, to be effected by the power of gospel truth in the world of mind, are set forth by revolutions in the material system—the passing away of the heavens and the earth, and the creation of new. The sanctified heart doth, even in this life, have a vision to discern the beauty and glory of God's works, which the unrenewed have not, even as the Apostle hath declared it—"Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for

them that love him." But when the mortal c
stitution shall be exchanged for an immortal c
and the soul shall put on a new and glorious
the senses refined and new ones opened, and
high and noble powers of the intellect shall
vastly more expanded than possible on ea
what glory will burst upon our view! what m
nificent displays of God's immensity will
given, and what sublimity of thought will kin
new adoration and praise! The change will
as great in our friends. The spirit there ne
not the mouldering fragments of the earthly bo
but God will give it a body suited to its glori
state, incorruptible and beautiful. The Apo
hath taught us the difference between the b
that now is, and the body that shall be. He h
spoken of the dishonor, weakness, and ani
nature of our earthly body; how thereby
hath tarnished human beauty, disease mar
its freshness, its strength perishing, and
honor lost in the grave; but the risen spirit sl
be clothed with a glorious form, that shall
a part of the unperishing universe, and have
inlets for mortal weakness, dishonor, and pe
How limited are the efforts of the might
minds through the imperfection of the mo
constitution! When the burning seraph inspi
the soul to lofty and glorious thought—bear
far beyond the range of sight, and awakes i
views of human progress that are promiseful
good, how soon does the body remind the soul
its weakness, and aspiring mind is forced to
the seraph go, and come back to the dull reali
of earth. O to what glory will the mind a
when it shall be connected with a body that

never impede its progress—that will never weaken the wings of thought—that will never bring a shadow over the page of heaven's glorious revelations of incorruptible good! *Then* we shall not mourn over the sinfulness of our race, and in perfect unity of spirit shall enjoy and be enjoyed.

Then should we not value more the indwelling spirit, and when called to part with the body of the beloved, forget our loss in thought of the spirit? Dust to dust! is the mandate of God. The cord must be unwound, the wheel be shattered, and the ruins be scattered by the empty well. But the spirit shall return to God who gave it. *Return!* Aye, it shall go home to its native, its Father's home! How much theology is there in those few words! Holy, comforting, elevating, and glorious! Only let it be felt, and Earth! thy power is weak—the man will feel his greatness, and triumph over the might of the enemy!

How does the body return to the earth as it was? By being assimilated to it. So with the spirit in its return to God. It shall assimilate to every thing heavenly, and be glorious, powerful, and all love. The body, when assimilated to the earth, takes new forms and loses its identity; but mind, unlike matter, cannot lose its identity. The soul, if deprived of its consciousness—of its memory by which the past is made present, is no longer *the* soul, is not a risen, but a changed spirit, and cannot sing the song of redemption. The captive made free, remembers his prison-house, and thoughts of the painful and degrading past give to his song of praise and joy an energy

not to be otherwise gained. The remembrance of its subjection to the vanity of this life, will give to the soul a noble enthusiasm to praise, adore, and serve God, when it shall enjoy the glorious liberty of heaven.

Let "passing away" then be written on the outer world. God, and heaven, and the spirit pass not away. Our heritage is sure. The glory to be anticipated is without a shadow. Let the hope sanctify our hearts, make us love to contemplate our destiny, and enable us to consecrate ourselves to the best purposes of life. Then will affliction find its comforter; sorrow its balm, and the reflections of heaven's light will illumine with cheering radiance the valley of death.

DEATH.

The poet of the Affections represents a warrior, clad and armed for the battle field, encountered by Death, who tells of his power and victories, and is answered by the valiant one—

> "I bow my soul to the will of heaven,
> O Death! and not to thine!"

Here is a wise thought—ascribing to God, and him alone, sovereignty over human life, not giving to Death an independent will, as though the personification were a reality. Death is too often spoken of as though it were an independent power, and not an ordination of the One Mind. Let us recognise the will of heaven in all that Death doeth.

THE BELOVED CHILD.

THERE was a little child very dear to his parents, not only because of the natural relation and the common attractions of childhood, but also because of peculiar circumstances attending his birth. He was their only child. His was the only voice that rang out the clear shout of gladness in their home, and by a thousand nameless acts of witching pleasantry won their thoughts and feelings oftentime from sadness and melancholy. His sportiveness was to them the music and poetry of joy, and lightened many toils and hardships. The father when abroad in the field, or pursuing a journey, had in his mind sweet remembrances of that child—his entrancing sweetness—his strange questions, the first developments of curiosity and thirst for knowledge,—and these went with him like a holy and joyous presence, guarding from thoughts that disturb the soul's quiet. Quick was his pace as he drew near home at night. Memory bore to him the sound of the glad welcome long ere he came nigh his abode, and in the misty twilight he saw, in the distance, the sparkling eyes of his boy, as the first stars break forth bright and beautiful from out the home above. O what an aggregate of joyous emotions were the glad feelings of the eager meetings of those hours! Forgotten then were the toils and all the weariness

of the past day, and none would dream that day had been one of severe labor and struggli The child grew in beauty and strength, and attractions to win mind and heart more complet And truly did the parents find that "as the p breath of children revives the life of aged men is our moral nature revived by their free and s ple thoughts, their native feeling, their airy m for little cause or none, their grief soon roused soon allayed. After drinking from those fo of still fresh existence, we return into the cr to struggle onward and do our part in life, perh as fervently as ever, but, for a time, with a kin and purer heart, and a spirit more lightly wis

The glad time of harvest came, and the so of the reapers were heard in the fields. T beloved child would go forth to his father, wh the air was sweet with the breath of the mo grass, the flowers and the grain. The eye of mother followed him as he leaped on the smil earth, and mingled the sweet notes of his cl voice with the merry sounds abroad. Her ge spirit was moved from its quiet element by exuberance of joy as she watched his playfuln and the innocent boisterousness of his full ha ness. As she turned again to her household ca her heart beat quick with grateful feeling for enjoyment derived from that child.

He was welcomed amid the reapers, as an ar of gladness, and a brighter look rested on the co tenance of each because of his presence. elastic spirit kept him bounding over the earth roaming here and there—chasing the gaudy sects that floated in the air, or wooing the birds to come to his breast. But the heat was

ıse for such life in such a little form, and the
n blood bounded up to the brain with unusual
ɜr. He grew dizzy—cried out in pain, My
! my head! and his father bade a lad bear
to his mother, not dreaming that the loved
ɜr was withering.
ıd was the meeting of mother and child!
' different from the parting! Hour after hour
ıt upon her knees, but a mother's tenderness
l not soothe to milder beatings the rapid pulse,
he lay on her bosom till noon, when he died!
hat a shadow does the waving hand of death
when it passes over such a form! The mother
never asked but for that one sunbeam—its
ınce was the light of home—and now how
is the noon-day! It was sad indeed to kiss
ɐautiful lips while their warmth was expiring
whose music was stilled. She bore him to
ɔuch; and went for the man of God, who
taught her of the Fountain of Life. While
ıste she rode towards the prophet's retreat at
nt Carmel, he saw her in the distance, and
ɲising her, sent his young man to meet her
learn the cause of her haste, as forebodings
ril entered his mind. He bade the messenger
ire—"Is it well with thee? is it well with
husband? is it well with the child? And she
ɾered, *It is well!*" Well with the living and
lead—Well with the dead as with the living.
ıt a spirit of resignation, and what a calm
ɲition of the wisdom of God's ordinations,
here manifested—and manifested by one on
ɯ the light of christianity had never beamed!
parent hearts must bleed for the vanished
ty of their idol, and a thousand fond and flat-

tering hopes must now be put away, and y
her it was well! And though the child slumb
in the arms of death, and endearments could w
no smile, yet she felt it was well with him—d
or foreboding had no place in her heart. T
alone reigned the feeling that bade the poet to
when his darling was taken away in the wim
beauty of infancy,—

"I look around and see
The evil ways of men;
And oh! beloved child!
I'm more than reconciled
To thy departure then.

Now like a dew-drop shrined
Within a crystal stone,
Thou 'rt safe in heaven, my dove!
Safe with the source of love,
The Everlasting One!"

The parent to whom the voice of Jesus reached—who has heard his teachings of Father's love, and the glory of heaven, has n cause to cherish the resigned and submissive s of that bereaved and childless mother. It is l —hard indeed to part thus with a beloved but Christ can give strength to bear the trial h bly and meekly, and teach the heart to say, well! And why, bereaved parent, why shou thou not say and feel this? Is not God the sa Is not the power which has taken away the s as that which gave? Has he not in every r lation to man manifested love for our little o He is the author of all our deep affections and attachments; in all our ardent love, he speak

his love; in all our desires for their happiness, he tells of his purposes of grace.

It *is* well with the departed child. He is saved from the evils which are in the world. Children of the best of parents sometimes become exceeding sinful, and the temptations of the world might have enticed him away from virtue and goodness. The earthly future was seen by the Omniscient, though it could not be by you, and is there any reason to cause you to doubt that God's time was the best time to take him away? Do not desire him back again, for thou knowest not what that wish would be—to what suffering thou shouldst call him, or what anguish would be prepared for thyself. Temptation will reach him now no more; grief will never wound him; and if in dreams thou seest him floating above thee and stretching out his little hand to take thine, it is to draw thee up to the home of purity, everlasting union, and bliss.

O in the thought that it is well with the child, find, O parent, sufficient cause to feel that it is well with thee, though one voice is silent whose music was the richest to thine ear. Heaven has an attraction now which it never had before; and as thy treasure is there, let thy heart be there also.

THE INFANT DEAD.

"Look upward to the clime beyond the skies,
Where the lost gem for which thy tears are given,
Again shall greet thy sad and longing eyes,
Reset among the jewelry of Heaven."

I HAVE attended the burial service of three infants from three homes this afternoon. What thrilling evidences have I seen of the power of infancy to create deep and fervent love; what passionate grief, what agonizing looks at the farewell, what eagerness to fasten the long and lingering kiss on the stilled lips of the beautiful and innocent dead! How many prayers have been breathed, hopes uttered, and tears shed, over those little ones! How much of human sympathy, and the patience of love, could the short history of their brief existence unfold, reminding us of the vanity of many human hopes and anticipations, and leading us by the sweet influences of devotion to contemplate the attractions of heaven—the character of Him who is the light of childhood's sunny hour and the source of the rich comforts given through the Beloved.

As I have gazed on the sleeping innocents, reposing in unearthly beauty, I could not but mentally acknowledge it a great privilege to be permitted to look upon the infant dead. If on earth there is a sight that can hush the heart, soften

the feelings, and make man feel the presence of the First Author of beauty, it is the view of an infant corpse, beautiful in death, like the budding rose checked in its unfoldings, and the more lovely than the expanded flower. Who can think of death with gloom while gazing there? Who has not asked himself, Is this the visitation of that dreadful power, the sound of whose name sends coldness through the manly frame? The mild and placid features of the babe, no longer distorted by distress, tell of nought but peace and quietness; and the holy loveliness of the expression that lingers on that cherub countenance, so full of heaven, calls up all the tender emotions of the heart and soul, and all that is harsh and boisterous is calmed to rest. Could we always be as holy and quiet in our passions as then, we should be freed from much that now shades and obscures the beauty around our daily paths, and the rudeness of anger would never arise to harm the kind affections. O there is a sweet and rich moral in the sight of the infant dead!

When we behold the little one suffer for a short time and then die, the mourning heart is sometimes oppressed with the thought—Why is it so —why are these innocents brought into being to suffer a while and then die? Bereaved mother, thou canst not fathom the whole of the Deity's design, yet thou canst more than thy query implies that thou hast. Thy child was not brought into being merely to suffer and die. It was born that it might be an angel—an immortal; and to wake a new love in thy heart, to develop new feelings, to bring out new powers, to elevate thy being, and give thee joy. It died that it might

live—live in glory; and its expanded mind, in the better world, does not question the goodness of the Deity in permitting it to know suffering in this life, but adores his wisdom. It died that it might be freed from earth's defilements and its sorrows. It died that it might lead those who loved it to estimate the things of earth aright, to feel the need of heaven and ask after immortality. God never designed it to perform any active part in the economy of things in this life, but by the silent and gentle ministries of its beauty and charms, the power of its sufferings to draw out sympathy, and the enquiring after God caused by its death, to do good. Yes, the infant dead have done good, perhaps unconsciously, but yet as God designed they should. The affections, the pure feelings, the strong sympathies, the watchful patience, the untiring devotion, the anxieties, they have called forth, tell of the good they have done—the great good; for what are these but the elements of all goodness? Those innocents have not lived in vain. They have indeed done much. They have taught, through their silent wisdom, many a soul of God, purity, and heaven. They are still doing good, for they are not and cannot be forgotten, and hearts of love still ask after them. And may they continue to ask, till they again possess their jewels, and the heart be made to know that the re-union is eternal.

THE SICK ONE AT CHURCH.

A JOURNALIST describing a visit to a church in Florence, relates a touching incident thus:—"A servant brought in his arms a beautiful female, and placed her tenderly on the seat before the clergyman. Her father, whose grey hair and sadness won my sympathy, followed behind, with trembling steps, and assisted to place the sweet sufferer gently on the seat. She might have been his grandchild, for she was not more than seventeen. But the hectic flush upon the pale cheek spoke sadly of a career that was nearly finished; like a rose in winter sheltered by a rich crimson curtain, whose leaves would fall with the first exposure or shock, her spirit needed but a breath to loose it from its delicate casket. And this," continues the writer, "was one of the spirits to which a lifeless sermon, without either consolation or direction, was given."

There are such needy souls in every congregation, whose hearts are blighted with grief, and over whose existence has passed a shade which this world's brightness can never remove. They come, or are borne to the house of God, to hear words of comfort like those which came from the lips of gentleness and grace, when Jesus spoke to the broken-hearted. But what are they oft-time doomed to hear! Words of bitterness and gloom; words that pierce the ear, that rob the

spirit of its little joy, and present to the imagination a vindictive God; and, like the flower, thirsting for "the waters of life," but is borne down by the rushing storm, they fall. How many sermons called *evangelical* are preached, which can impart not one ray of comfort to such as the Florentine sufferer! They nerve themselves to seek the sanctuary of prayer that they may gain strength of heart, and are borne home weaker in body and spirit than they came. Such was the confession of one to me who frequented the church where the echoes of the thunders of Sinai were heard oftener than the sweet strains of gospel peace.

Would that we knew the history of the beautiful Florentine sick one! Perhaps she mourned the death of the chosen, early called away, and grief, like the nestling worm in the delicate flower, was stealing away her life. Dark were the visions of her mind as the doubt of "meeting again" crept over her thoughts, and the words of the preacher did but add to that gloom of her soul. Poor maiden, my heart bleeds for thee! for thou art but the type of many crushed spirits who know not the true Comforter! Would that I might tell thee of him who loved Martha and Mary of Bethany, and breathed the words of life and peace to them most needed by thee, and on his love we would dwell till thine eye wore the brightness of the seraphs' smile when they tune their harps to sing of deathless tenderness and care! Sweet sufferer! perhaps thou art now a seraph thyself, and comest with the breathings of celestial melody in night dreams to earth's weary ones. Earth's griefs and pains were but to fit

thee for the ministries of celestial love, and teach thee how the mourning ones would need thy care when thou shouldst be an angel visitant to the lower world, to bear, in the mysteriousness of the Father's secret love, comfort, and hope, and peace, to the suffering and bowed down. Such, perchance, as thou art now was the blest spirit that came to the agonized Jesus in the garden, when "there appeared an angel unto him, *strengthening* him;" and thou comest to the aged father who followed thee to the house of prayer, and thou wilt lead him through death's dark valley in hope and joy to the better land. Sweet spirit! I would know thee now.

THE GLORY OF THE FATHER.

St. Paul in treating of the resurrection of our Lord says, that he "was raised up from the dead *by the glory of the Father*," and in another epistle ascribes this resurrection to the *power* of God. If the *glory* of the *Father* be the exercise of his power in the resurrection, must not the Paternal Goodness be marked on all the issues of the resurrection? It cannot be the glory of a father to bring children into existence to other than a life of improvement and happiness. Such, we trust, is the life of eternity.

A THOUGHT FOR MOURNERS.

I HAVE just left a home where the voice of mourning is heard because of the departure of a beloved parent, who for upwards of two years suffered intensely. She longed to die—she said so often, and why now do the bereaved lament that she has had her prayer answered? Why is it we mourn for those whose last years were but days and nights of pain? It is because we do not think of them only as they were *then*, for our memory goes beyond that time and recalls them as they were in years of health and joy—we think over all they then were to us—the happy hours passed in their society—the zest given to enjoyments by their participation—the value of their counsel and aid, and the ministries of their kindness in our seasons of affliction. It is *these memories* which make us weep bitter tears that they are lost to us—it is these remembrances which cause us to forget their sorrows and pains, and we cannot throw from us the thought, that if they were restored, those past delights might be renewed, and we again be mutually happy.

But we should not dwell too fondly on these relics of returnless joys. Such an indulgence is apt to blind us to the true view of their departure, and make us cherish much selfish sorrow. Selfish, because the mind dwells entirely

on what it hath lost, and not at all on from what the departed is freed, and what they have gained.

The mother, whose child has been shrouded in the last robe it will ever need, should not dwell only on the entrancing charms of her babe ere it knew of pain and grief, but remember its hours of suffering were but a token of what it would often meet in this world, had it been permitted to dwell here, and let her thoughts lead her to the sweet comforts of its change—that now the dear bird of her heart will never with a drooping wing bend to the earth in weakness, but with ever strong pinions float on stormless air, afar from the fowler's snare, above all dangers, where are no causes of fear to disturb with the cries of pain the blissful song it sings. And all bereaved hearts should take example from this christian course, and not limit the consolations of God by refusing to be comforted—by dwelling only on the sunshine of the departed one's existence, forgetting the darkness of the closing day, and the gain of the departure to the freed soul.

God is not changed, though a change has come over the face of the beloved; and though shadows shroud the light of our homes, the light of our Father's love is never darkened. In affliction we should give our mind to these thoughts—that if we are called to suffer repeated bereavements, we may feel there are repeated comforts, and that we should hope and trust.

DEATH OF THE YOUNG IN SUMMER.

"I looked along the laughing earth,
Up the blue heavens, and thro' the middle air,
Joyfully ringing with the gay bird's song,
And wept! I thought how sad for one so young
To bid farewell to so much happiness."

I HAVE just bade farewell to one who met the consciousness that she must die with the calmest composure. While nature is robed in her summer garments, the air vocal with melody, and bloom and fragrance in all her bowers; while is opening the season most ardently longed for by the young, and the memory of pleasant days in the past is bringing up to the eye of fancy beautiful images and scenes; the thought of death is, to many, awful indeed. The shroud, the pall, and the tomb, present a gloomy contrast to the life and brightness of the outer world, and the thought is put away as gloomy. It was not so with her I have just seen. "Thou must die!" came with no terror to her ear—she could hear it and smile; for she did not contrast the glory of summer and the desolation of the grave—the music and joy around with the silence of the last resting-place; nor did she dwell on how brightly the river would flow, the flowers bloom, and how sweetly the birds would sing, while she should be uncon-

scious of all; but her heaven-enlightened mind contrasted earth and heaven—the pains and infirmities of this life with the health and joy of a better,—and though she loved much the pleasant scenes of her childhood, the friends of past happy days, and had a thousand ties to bind her to earth,—yet the attractions of heaven were stronger than all, and she was ready to depart to be with Christ. She has departed. Her resignation, patience, and trust in God and her Savior, are well implied in the verse she murmured out soon before she lost the consciousness of things around her,—

"Jesus can make a dying bed
Feel soft as downy pillows are,
While on his breast I lean my head,
And breathe my life out sweetly there."

Think you, ye who are in the morning of life, with many attractions around you making existence dear, with bright hopes, glowing prospects, and dear friends and companions,—think you, that ye could meet the victor death as she met him—resigned, submissive and happy? She had as much to make her cling to earth as you have; and as you think of it all, tell me—tell your own hearts, did she choose a *good part?* You cannot answer, nay! Had life here been spared her till the cares of old age came upon her, it would be no less true—the part she chose—to love religion—fits for life, fits for death, for wealth and poverty, for high dignities and humble stations, and they who choose it are wise.

Of the comfort that sustained and gave patience to that sister, I would speak to thee who art now

on the bed of sickness, and in whose heart is t
thought that summer will bloom for thee no mo
Thou lovest her beauties. Her flowers, smil
and songs bless thee. Her breath is laden w
refreshing sweets, as though the airs of parad
were wafted to thy couch. To lift the curtai
folds and look out for a moment is a joy too de
for utterance, and the summer's melodies a
loveliness seem more spiritual than ever before
thee. Is it sad to thee to leave all this? to l
farewell to the smiling and beautiful earth? I
me whisper to thee of heaven. Thou hast otl
eyes than those that look out on the outer wo
—open, O open them in the light of thy Fathe
love. Remember what thou hast heard of
Savior's compassion and sympathy, and give
thy power of thought to understand the fulne
of his love. Bow down thy spirit in prayer
the God of grace, and he will send forth from l
presence the angel of strength, who shall lea
thee to forget earth's loveliness in the exceedi
beauty of heaven. There is, thou knowest, lig
and glory beyond the darkness and gloom of t
chamber; even so is it with the grave. I cann
lift the curtain for thee, but God will; and, pea
to thy spirit! he will never let it down again
darken thy vision. Go, as thy sister went, wi
trust in the reality of imperishable bloom, to t
enjoyment of which the God of salvation w
bring thee.

E DEATH OF THE SINFUL.

hat is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God Lord belong the issues of death." Ps. lxviii. 20.

VOICE of peculiar tenderness should speak e bereaved over the grave of the sinful. n the good die, reason tells us it is well with , and their memory is blessed in imparting lation, as part after part of the active life of ıess is called up, and we see that they pur- a high and honorable aim. We love to r over their history—to dwell on what they and the melancholy of our thoughts is to the soul, while we pause over memory's ls of well-spent years. We cannot leave in the grave, but pursue them beyond to a of undimmed brightness, where all the iful of this life will be preserved, and where ıfirmities of the earthly constitution will no impede the spirit in its glorious advances ds perfection. And then, too, how sooth- re the voices of others who speak of de- l excellence, enumerating the mental and attractions of the beloved, and assisting to out into the boldest relief all that made us e as our own life our relative or friend. nore than this,—how confidently and kindly hey assure us of the better state of the de- l, and tell us our sorrow is selfish, as to call

him back, or wish him here, were not asking aught for him. And thus our spirits are soothed to unmurmuring quietness, while we rest in the assurance of their blessedness, and feel that with them

> "The future cannot contradict the past—
> Mortality's last exercise and proof
> Is undergone."

But it is not so with all. We are bound to the sinful as well as to the good. We are called to weep over prostituted talents, recklessness of every dignified aim in life, and the determined pursuit of evil, as well as to rejoice in the virtues and excellences of the devoted to goodness. We labor, but in vain, to recall the wanderer and turn the feet of the swift to do wrong into the paths of well-doing. Weary days and gloomy nights are passed in mental anguish, while we know not where they are or what they are pursuing, but fear the worst. They return for a little while and entreaties and pleadings produce a momentary good effect, but anon the voice of the betrayer is heard mingling in the sounds of revelling and wanton mirth. Friends fear to speak to us of them lest they pain us, and terrible are the seasons of torturing suspense, and the knowledge of the reality of their evil.

And when such are arrested in the course of folly, and suddenly prostrated in death, or linger long in unconsciousness, must we bury them in despair? Is there no star of hope to send down its cheering light amid the dense gloom that surrounds us? Is all lost? Faint not, bleeding heart! Christianity is the comforter, and com-

forts in all tribulation, adapting itself to all human need. It promises an end to sin—a purification of every soul—a union of all to God. It utters with a kinder voice all the sweet promises in the elder word of our God, and assures us that that which was sown in dishonor shall be raised in glory.

Let me bear thee back to far distant time, and we will learn a lesson of comfort and hope. Inspiration hath encouraged us, as we are told that "whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope." And rich indeed is our holy book in its biographies, unfolding to us the workings of the various passions, and the strength of religious trust. To one passage only in one life would I now refer—to that wherein it is said—"The soul of King David longed to go forth unto Absalom, for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead."—Absalom and Amnon were two sons of David, and the passage implies that one was afar off, and the other dead, and that David longed to go forth to the one, while concerning the state of the other he was comforted. What character did Amnon bear? Was he a devoted child of goodness, living soberly, righteously, and godly in an evil world; and causing to emanate from himself the light of a brilliant example of fidelity to the higher endowments of our nature? If so, reason says, David might well be comforted—comforted as he thought of the past, and as he contemplated the future; and well might he be more concerned for the living and unfilial Absalom. But it was not so with

Amnon. Truth has drawn no such pleasant portrait, but a dark one, repulsive to the commonest sensibilities. He was a villain, a villain of the deepest die. He clothed himself with hypocrisy to awaken a tender interest towards him in the heart of his half-sister Tamar, the sister of Absalom, and then violated all the sanctities of home, innocence, and weakness—adding thereto the baseness of an utter disregard of her after fate, leaving her to dwell "desolate in her brother Absalom's house." That brother, with all his wildness and recklessness, greeted her kindly and ceased not to call her "my sister" with tenderness; but against Amnon his soul was incensed, and he laid a snare to entrap him. A gorgeous banquet was prepared, and all the king's sons were there. Free flowed the wine, and the merriment ran high—but in a moment all was consternation, for Absalom's servants had murdered Amnon while "his heart was merry with wine." Thus he died. Thus died him concerning whom David was comforted, *seeing he was dead.*

In solemn mood let us here pause. Let us recall the many declarations of David concerning the wicked prostrated in their wickedness, and compare them with what the historian hath said of him in the passage quoted. Can we use the one to exclude hope for the departed sinful, and yet see a rational meaning in the other? David mourned for his son every day, as a parent must weep when goodness has been so dishonored as it was by Amnon, and when death comes as it came to him. But yet David was "comforted concerning Amnon." How was he com-

ed? The sacred historian gives us but the ple answer—"*seeing he was dead.*" Yet that died suddenly, amid revelry and mirth, while heart was merry with wine, and, so far as we e any account, with the guilt of a foul and mous crime upon him. What then could com- David, if he believed the sentiment concern- the death of the sinful, that his writings are ted to uphold? Did he believe that sentiment, fact that Amnon *was dead*, in a state of unalter- character, was the very cause why he should p and lament without hope; for how could be comforted concerning him, seeing he was d? His comfort came from the great and sed truths that God is unchangeable, and is d unto all, extending his tender mercies over his works. Man cannot prevent the broad nsion of those mercies, and under them, in able hope, we place the departed sinful. And y should we not? Does death change God? es it change Christ, who loved and died for all? es it change the angels who rejoice over one entant sinner and fill heaven with the music joy? Does it change the saints who tearfully ad for the redemption of the abandoned and erable? Is all heaven changed towards the r sinner when death has sealed its victim? elieve it not. God's mercy is inexhaustible. us Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and ver. He travailed in soul for the deliverance all, and sin shall not reign triumphant over a gle soul for whom Christ died. He hath done, doeth, he will do, all things well. The echo his merciful prayer on the cross will never die, the redemption is complete, and human na-

ture wears the distinct likeness of the Divinity. "The fining pot for silver, the furnace for gold; but the Lord trieth the heart." The heart is worth more than silver and gold. The fires of the furnace cannot purify it, but trust thou in God, who can and will do it by his grace.

No other trust than this could have kept the heart of David from breaking, when again he was called to weep over the sinful dead—his idol Absalom! How truly, and exquisitely beautifully, has the poet Willis described the father's feelings,—

"The grave hath won thee. I shall hear the gush
Of music, and the voices of the young;
And life will pass me in the mantling blush,
And the dark tresses to the soft winds flung;—
But thou no more, with thy sweet voice, shall come
To meet me, Absalom!

And now, farewell! 'T is hard to give thee up,
With death so like a gentle slumber on thee;—
And thy dark sin!—Oh! I could drink the cup,
If from this woe its bitterness had won thee.
May God have called thee, like a wanderer, home,
My erring Absalom!"

David bending thus over the beloved, though sinful, is the representation of many parents—many tender and devoted friends. Who shall speak aught but hope to them? Is there not an instinctive prompting to bid them hope on, and trust that an infinite Father will do all that a finite would? The exertion of his power in the resurrection, whereby Christ Jesus was raised from the dead, is called "the glory of the Father." Blessed truth! A father's glory must be in the

improvement and happiness of his children; and if the glory of the Divine Father marks the character of the power of God in the resurrection, who can doubt the goodness of the issues? How tenderly will an earthly father support the frame of a son, prostrated in his iniquity, and now first coming forth from the sick chamber to the breathings of heaven! How will he anxiously renew endeavors to fix the love of goodness in his heart, and hope that the past will be enough to teach of duty for the future! Kindness pervades every thought of that parent thus situated. It is the glory of that father. And O, is not that glory a type or token of our Heavenly Father's glory? I would trust that it is, and in that trust repose a confident hope that all is not lost when the sinful die. And at the grave, where the heart can tell only of its love, I will think of the sleeping

"Kindly and gently, and as of one
For whom 't is well to be fled and gone—
As of a bird from a chain unbound,
As of a wanderer whose home is found—
So let it be!"

THOUGHTS FOR MEDITATIC

O give thy soul to sacred thought,
And, from the depths of the mysterious True,
The ministering spirits of our God shall come,
To teach, to comfort, and to bless thy heart.

Perfect love casteth out fear.—1 *John* iv. 18.

The fear that is exorcised by love, is all is opposite to calm and full confidence in merciful designs of the Deity. And why sh I not have this love? Why should I not a it and let its power expel "the legion" of demon-thoughts of fear? Is it not plainly enc written that God is good unto all, and that tender mercies are over all his works? W should I fear?

Our Father, which art in heaven.—*Matt.* vi. 9.

What is it makes God our *Father?* Not s ply that he created us, for he is the creator of hills, the trees, the animals, and we never him the Father of these; but the communica of his own Spirit—a kindred nature—is w constitutes him our Father. "God is a spi there is a spirit in man; God is "the Fathe the spirits of all flesh." This is the chain of paternity. The relation is as enduring as

existence of mind; and in this, our spiritual nature, is written the best assurances of ultimate redemption and bliss, and with pious thought we may read them.

All things work together for good to them that love God.—*Rom.* viii. 28.

The Apostle does not say all things shall or will work together for good, but that they do work thus now; and that those who have the true love of God in them acknowledge and rejoice in the truth. This is an estimable benefit derived from the cultivation of spiritual love, giving to the trusting soul the full assurance of faith that good is the product of all the working elements in the universe of God.

Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.—*James* iv. 8.

Though, as the Apostle assured the Athenians, God is not "far from every one of us," yet there is a sense in which he may be said to be far from us and we far from him; it is when the soul forgets its highest relations, and lives as a mere earthly being. The cultivation of a nearness to God is the source of sweet comfort. By grateful thought and prayerful meditation we draw nigh to him and he draws nigh unto us—his presence is felt all around us, and we know what the Savior meant when he spake of the Father taking up his abode with the faithful. Affectionate thought has a mystic, but great power, to bring the far off nigh.

That he would grant you, according to the riches o glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in inner man.—*Eph.* iii. 16.

When Moses prayed of the Lord, "I bes thee, show me thy glory," he was answered the assurance, "I will make all my good pass before thee." Thus we are assured God's glory is his goodness, and "the riche his glory" must be the riches of his goodne the unsearchable riches of his love toward r kind in Jesus Christ. Thought on these which they are made to enter the heart, stren ens the inner man, and the soul becomes a v over many foes—adversity, pain, and bere ment, in all their varied forms and powers.

Wearisome nights are appointed unto me.—*Job* vii

Appointed by whom or what? Not by ch or fate, but by or through the ordinations wise being. That they are so appointed comfort to cheer the wearied, for if love call to the cares of a watch, the remembrance of love gives us the spirit of patience. There i night, no weariness in heaven! How sweet thought! how comforting was it to our M when he suffered on earth! Dwell on it, a will soothe thy spirit, O afflicted one!

She goeth unto the grave, to weep there.—*John* xi.

The Jews said this of Mary as she went to meet the Savior—they knew not that went to greet him. So may it be with t child of sorrow. If in thy heart is the lo Jesus, the Resurrection and the Life, it ma

to commune and mingle thy tears with his sympathies that thou goest, as thy steps are directed toward the grave of the beloved, and the observer regards thee as going thither to weep. Jesus will go with thee, as he went with Mary, and he will comfort thee as he comforted her. Do not go to the grave only to weep; go to hope, as the Truth teacheth of immortal life and reunion.

Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me.—*John* xvii. 11.

It was with Jesus, as it is with all hearts of affection and sensibility, when life is drawing near its close. Love will feel anxious for its peculiar loves, and desire to assure itself that they will be provided for. May it be with me, in adversity or in death, as it was with Jesus—having in my soul the true spirit to pray, Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me. And what is a more precious name, or more abounding in reasons for trust, than "Holy Father?"

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.—*Psalm* xxiii. 4.

And why should I fear? Has God departed from me? O no, for in him I live, and move, and have my being. The passage through the shadowy valley is a part of the pilgrimage allotted me, and I will pursue it with the spirit of thankfulness, that shall subdue, if not expel all fear. Be with me, God of salvation! Let my heart own in humble penitence its sins, and yield its affections in full love toward Thee.

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.—*Job* xiii. 1

A pious servant of God laid on the bed c death, was conscious at the hour of his departu that his earthly life was near its end, and calle to his daughter to bring him the Bible. "Turn, said he, "to the eighth chapter of Romans, an place my finger on the words, 'I am persuade that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor prir cipalities, nor powers, nor things present, nc things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor an other creature, shall be able to separate us fro the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus ou Lord.'" "Now is my finger on them?" said th dying man. "It is," was the reply, when h sweetly fell asleep. Precious words indeed ar they!

In thy light shall we see light.—*Psalm* xxxvi. 9.

All knowledge that can illumine the min comes from God. We must gain the light o his word, ere nature, our own hearts, or huma destiny, can be rightly studied. God said, Le there be light; and there was light;—and b that light earth and heaven became beautiful t the eyes of angels; so when spiritual light i shed into the soul, spiritual beauty is revealec and we see Christ as the Savior of the world.

Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and forgive him? Jesus saith, I say not unto thee, Until seve times, but until seventy times seven.—*Matt.* xviii. 21, 2

As God is a merciful and forgiving being, it i impossible that his presence should be fully en joyed by a heart that has not full sympathy wit

the spirit of forgiveness. Let me look into my own heart, and expel all unkind feelings or passions, and God will fill up the places with his love. Unlimited forgiveness is a christian duty; the exercise of the corresponding spirit, begets in the soul the fullest assurance of the unlimited forgiveness of God. He does not require us to be more generous than he is himself. Live, reader, live in peace and amity, and a reconciled heart shall be thine.

I will endeavor that you may be able after my decease, to have these things always in remembrance.—2 *Peter* i. 15.

The dying testimony of many a trustful spirit has lingered, like a holy presence, with those to whom it was committed, and effected great good. Memory is strangely quickened in reference to a beloved one when that one is taken away; what seemed to make no impression at the time, is then felt in great power, and with melancholy or joy the heart reads over and over its records. Let us leave the testimony that holiness is the happy element of the soul, and that experience has taught that there is no satisfaction in disobedience to God's reasonable requirements. Let us tell of our Maker's love, his merciful kindness in the past, and the fulness of the Gospel blessing. After our decease, some soul may be greatly blessed thereby.

I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.—*Ps.* xxiii. 6.

What does the Psalmist mean, if he does not mean that he will remember ever and always the delight and pleasure he has enjoyed in the house

of the Lord, and by ever having with him the associations of the Lord's house? There the conviction of God's goodness had comforted him, and he had felt secure under his protecting care. He knew that by continued meditation on the divine perfections, and the Deity's love in his works, he could, let him journey wherever he might, be in the house of the Lord. It was thus he was enabled to say—"My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord." "O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day." By the same wise course the poet's words will become truth to us—

"There's beauty all around our paths, if but our watchful eyes
Can trace it 'mid familiar things, and through their lowly guise;
And feel that by the lights and clouds, through which our pathway lies,
By the beauty and the grief alike, we are training for the skies!"

FAITH'S TRIUMPH OVER DEATH.

"Boast not thy victory, Death!
It is but as a Tyrant's reign
O'er the voice and the lip which he bids be still;
But the fiery thought and lofty will
Are not for him to chain."

It was a bright manifestation of God's goodness when christianity first dawned on the world to give man new views of death, and take away the oppression that rested on the heart through fear of death. In every nation and among every people, death is a solemn thing. Human nature stands aghast at the sight of mortality; and many a christian, thoroughly assured of another and better life, cannot but wish that a translation might be effected without the intervention of death. But we cannot alter the decrees of the Almighty; and conscious that they are the decrees of infinite wisdom, whose soul is love, we can and should learn to submit to what cannot be averted. To do this, we are persuaded by our allegiance to the Supreme Disposer of events, and our own happiness; for life is uncertain to the healthiest and strongest, and we should certainly be prepared to meet what may be near, as rational beings and as christians. And why is it that so many are through fear of death all their life-time subject to bondage? shrinking from the very thought or imagination

of death, and clothing it with unutterable terrors? Such send their feelings back into dark ages, or amid nations never blessed with the light of the gospel, instead of moulding and fashioning them according to Christ's truth, looking upon him as the Resurrection and the Life. The example of Jesus illustrated the true nobility of mind in the life that now is—to what spiritual excellence and glory man may attain by obedience to the Divine will. His resurrection was a prefiguration of the raising of all mankind, and the life he ascended to is the life of the universal whole. The power of God brought him into the one and the other; and the power of God is the ground of confidence for life immortal to all mankind. To those who denied the Resurrection, the Savior said—Ye know not the power of God! and deep was his meaning therein. Ye know not the attributes of that Power, how it encircles the created spirit for good, and what glory it can and will bring that spirit to know and enjoy. God is infinite, his Power is infinite; God is Love, his Power is Love; and what are the limits that man shall dare to place to the operations and effects of the infinite power of love? This single consideration is enough to settle, in our minds, what will be the character of the exercise of God's power in the Resurrection. He would not bring us into a life that would be a curse. A power that would, has no claim to the attribute of love. It must be wrathful, and unworthy of reverence.

Even amid the shadows and mists of heathenism there have been minds that looked forward beyond this world and have sung of a better land. The aspirations of the soul went out in search of

something better than earth, and visions of beauty not of this world have gladdened them. Where this has been, the images of death have been those which the christian scriptures use, and the soul has been fortified against fear and dread. Yet shadows rested on all their hopes and speculations. The true light had not come. A form had not been robed for the tomb, laid there and left, and come forth to life on which death's seal could no more be laid. This was to be accomplished in the Messiah of Israel. It was accomplished. With him humanity arose, and the harps of heaven are ready for the song—Death is swallowed up of life!

To have the spirit of this great and glorious triumph in the soul, can only be granted by christian faith. The children of Abraham by faith can alone enjoy the prospect of the illimitable victory, for to them only is the prospect spread out. Here then is one of the peculiar blessings of faith, the richest of the many streams of grace that gladden the city of our God. In this faith to live, is to live free from what oppresses so many; in this faith to die, is to die like the patriarchs in hope of another, even an heavenly country; it is to die with glory already in the soul, feeling the sway of the immortal, ere mortality is put off.

But to die happy, in triumph and rejoicing, is no proof that the person has God's truth in his mind, though death has been often made a test of doctrines. And we should be careful to discriminate justly in reference to this matter, for if we look upon triumph in death as a test of truth, how shall we decide what is truth, seeing that there have been professors of all creeds who have died

triumphantly? Even heathens have presented us instances of the same. So much has death been made or looked upon as a test of truth, that not but a few years since a book was published containing accounts of the last moments of infidel writers, though but a few could be gathered where calmness was manifested, and all are distinguished from the christian's death by the absence of the triumphs of hope. After all is said and done, the most that can be made of a triumphant death, is, that the power of hope can entirely subdue the fear and dread of death, and the sincerity of the professions of the person is thoroughly tested. Nothing is proved but that we may become victors over death, and that the triumphant dead were sincere. This is all that is proved by the victory of the martyr, as martyrs to error have thus died, as well as martyrs to the living and divine truth.

But here lies the great difference between our faith in this respect, and antagonist ones;—It is no marvel that one who believes our faith should die triumphantly, whereas it is a marvel that any should die in peace who doubt it, and place confidence in the doctrines of interminable woe. This last I can illustrate by a reference to the last days of Dr. Thomas Scott, author of a commentary on the Bible. During his last sickness he was often distressed with fears of what might be his eternal state, and speaking of hope concerning that state, candidly and justly said,—"Even *one fear*, where *infinity is at stake*, is sufficient to countervail all its consoling effects." And who, I solemnly ask, who can candidly look on all that partial doctrines teach, especially Calvinism, and say that the believer can be free from fear? How can any one

know, beyond question, that he is one of the elect? or if he be an Arminian, can he positively decide that he has done enough to give an unclouded hope? Going no farther than biographies of distinguished advocates of Partialism, how many deaths can be described where fear triumphed over hope! How many, whose lives were marked by no vileness, have been driven to find refuge from fear in madness! How many have ended their life with their own hands! The very thought of *a possibility* of being everlastingly lost, has been too much for the sanity of some minds, and the imagination has made the lives of many, as it did the life of Saurin, "a cruel bitter!" In short, I deem it susceptible of the clearest proof, that whereas the natural, legitimate tendency of our faith is to cause the soul to throw itself, with a filial and confident trust, into the arms of the Deity's protection, the natural and legitimate tendency of antagonist doctrines is to gender fear of death, and clothe the future with uncertainty, if not terror. God gives the soul more comfort oftentime in death than could be extracted from the creed of the dying one, and the instinctive hopes of the human heart will often neutralize the natural effect of cherished errors. There is something in death—and we thank our Father for it!—that inclines the heart to hope for good and lean on God.

And yet our faith is sometimes vilified as one that cannot support the soul in death, when we could recall a long catalogue of triumphant deaths, and say of the victors—"*These all died in faith!*" in the faith of universal and complete redemption.

Such a catalogue has been given to the wor
and every day adds thereto. Yet there are t
who declare that no one ever died a Univers
and that Universalism will not support in de
Wilful deniers of God-glorifying truth! R
less enemies of the loveliest view of the Go
They cannot alter what has been, nor erase
records of victorious departures. Shades of
ray, Winchester, King, and ye glorious com
of the faithful! none shall tear away your cro
—none shall deny ye the hope that cheered
gladdened in the last hour—none shall take
us our confidence in that which supported yo

In solemnity of thought and feeling I w
revisit the scenes where the faithful have di
where I have seen death made beautiful by
power of faith—where I have seen the young
the aged Universalist die in triumph—and w
I have felt—

> "Our smitten friends
> Are angels sent on missions full of love;
> For us they languish, and for us they die."

The first time I ever saw the lip stilled no
to move, I was in a familiar home as a mini
of Hope. A young and gentle wife was the
ject. Her life had been marked continuously
amiability, and they who knew her, loved
and could not but love. She had been a mot
but the babe had been early called home.
thought of it as with Jesus, in the habitatio
the blest, and her dreams were the renewal
past happy days. But consumption poured

*See "The Christian's Triumph and Happy D
Scenes," by J. G. Adams.

slow poison into her blood, and death began its work. Hope and fear were for months the alternate visiters of the hearts of her friends, till at last fear only came. Weaker and weaker she became, but no fears to torture and oppress, and hasten her departure, came near her mind. The mild evening star in the clear blue sky, were not a more beautiful or true emblem of calmness, than was she. Never, O never did a tired babe lie down to sleep with more composure than she died. A dew-drop was never called up from the earth by the sun more gently and silently, than her spirit passed away. O what a smile of celestial pity would pass over her angelic countenance, were she to hear the enemy's assertion—that no one ever died a Universalist!

In the chamber that now is present to my imagination, there is a melancholy, and yet sweet scene. A manly form is there withering under the blighting power of the same disease that wasted our gentle sister. In his days of strength he gave but little attention to religious truth, though discreet in his general deportment. When sickness came, he was ill able to think calmly of death, and with tears and trembling he received my first inquiry—if he could think of death without dread? How well do I remember how he suddenly drew the clothes over his head, as though he would shrink from his thoughts and the fearful impressions of a horrid dream. I prayed and he was calmed. Month after month he wasted away, and his slender wife and devoted sister lingered constantly by him. His growth in the knowledge of divine things was

astonishing, so absorbed was his mind therein, and with the waste of the body he realized the increase of the spirit. He could now talk of death calmly and joyfully; and much did he say to inspire his sickly wife with fortitude and resignation. Christ was in him the hope of glory; and when the last hour was come, he was full of triumph, and his little strength was used alternately in telling of the joy of faith and hope, and comforting his weeping wife and sister, and faithfully counselling a wayward brother. As the moment of his departure drew near, strange strength seemed given him; his shouts of gladness had an awfulness in them, from their very intensity; and he died in the very arms of triumphant hope! Here is an instance of the embracing of Universalism on a death-bed, as well as its comforting and elevating power.

I turn to another home where are sickness and grief. There is a sister whose heart loved our faith, and its hopes and revelations were her comfort and joy. As disease wasted her frame, her hold on eternal things increased in strength, and her visions of the beautiful in the future grew more brilliant and distinct. To her the departure through death's door to the spirit world of purity and bliss, was a reality. She as heartily anticipated re-union with her departed and dearly loved mother, as ever did the child as it entered the home where it heard its parent's voice. A short time previous to her death, she was expressing her love for the ordinances of the gospel—the delight she should enjoy in being permitted to hear the gospel preached, and Zion's songs sung, and the prayer of faith offered, and

attending the commemorative rite of the Communion; and most earnestly desired that she might gain strength sufficient to attend them, and have her only child publicly dedicated to God. But such a desire could not be reasonably cherished, as life's energies were nearly wasted. Her heart was in her child, and she thought much of its future well-being, desiring it might be given to God by the baptism of faith, hope, and love. The time when she was able to attend to the service was early evening. Several relatives and friends were present in her chamber, and the child, a beautiful, blooming one, stood in a chair at the foot of its mother's bed, so that she, with her head elevated, was able to look with her dying eyes upon the darling. Never did I experience such a solemnity of feeling, as when I there stood between the living and the dying, and gave the one to God in prayer, knowing not but the other might depart ere the service was ended. It was a melting scene of religious sensibility, and God was felt to be there! The rite was ended; and when I had borne the child to its mother for the last kiss, she exclaimed, "I 'm happy now; all is done that I wished; I want to go; I long to see dear mother in heaven!" Not long delay did she suffer; but, in humble reliance on the mercy and goodness of her heavenly Father, she left this world of change for the better and happier—the holy and eternal.

I turn to another patient spirit, the last two years of whose life were full of suffering, interrupted by only short seasons of freedom from extreme weakness and pain. During the last year it may be said that she had been gradually

dying—the poison of the disease (a cancer) continuing to diffuse itself throughout the system, corrupting the fountains of life. I attended her frequently. My first visit was peculiarly interesting. Intense pain and sweet pleasure were commingled. I have often stood by her when the greatest effort was needed to keep my tears from gushing out like a flood; so unwonted was the agonizing picture of human suffering. I have wept in spirit bitterly that she should suffer so much. And then her language was overwhelming to sensibility. "I know not," said she at one time, "why I should have to suffer so much; yet I know my heavenly Father is good and wise; and I am content." And the same sentiment was ever in her soul, a source of the purest comfort. During her whole sickness not a murmur escaped her lips. "My Father is wiser than I," subdued every feeling of impatience. She was always glad to welcome visiters; and many daily entered her home, from all sects and classes. All felt, as they crossed her threshold, that they were entering the habitation of a christian; and from the lips of many, of all orders, I have heard the confession—"She is one of the most perfect women I ever saw—always good, and loved by all." And to each she would own that it was her faith in God's universal, unchanging love that made her all she was, and comforted her in her sickness. She loved God's house—the preaching of the word—the prayers and praises of his children; and this love was the strengthening angel to her spirit. She lingered long, waiting her release. No shadow ever came over her calm and holy confidence in

God; and often did she say, that were she not a believer in the truths of Universalism, she knew not how she could bear her sufferings; for that faith alone could present the unclouded heaven she delighted with the spirit's eye to gaze upon. That, to her, was home. Almost the last words she uttered were, "I want to go home—I must go home—do not wish to keep me here." When the hour came, she resigned herself in calmness and true hope; and in death a sweet smile rested on her features, unaccompanied by a single trace of pain. Many felt it a duty to attempt to shake her faith. But as well might they have attempted with the same breath to blow out the sun. She was a happy victor over pain and death.

I turn to another, beautiful in life as in death. Of her I can truly and earnestly say, that she was one of the most exemplary women I ever knew. Her mind was early convinced of the truth of the gospel, and she walked in its holy influence. Her trials in sickness were many and severe—unutterably so—attended with circumstances too painful for narration. Could I command the most eloquent language, it would be impossible to convey an adequate idea of the reality, awaking as it did the most sorrowful emotions in those who were but attendants where they could not aid. Her sufferings were protracted in a degree astonishing to aged experience and profound medical skill; but were borne with a fortitude and patience that well accorded with the christian harmony of her life. Never was a being more resigned; though repeated instances of severest trial called anew for the

exercise of every feeling of fortitude and patience. When she first supposed herself dying, she said to a sister-friend, "If I die, tell them (her husband, relatives, and friends) I die perfectly happy." This I have reason to believe she said because some of her relatives who dislike our faith, had many times assured her that she would renounce her faith when death was near; and also to give a thought of pleasantness to her friends, as she expected she should expire without being able to converse, and would have them understand the emotions of her soul.

Her severest sickness continued for about a week. She was then told by her physician that he thought she could not live through the day. Myself and wife were sent for; but my wife only was able to obey the call. To her she confided a most tender message to the children, expressive of her anxiety for their welfare, and a kind remembrance to a social society in which she was an officer, adding, in her after conversation, her contentment and hope in the gospel. About this time she told one of her friends to inform a Calvinistic relative that she never felt more confidence in the doctrine she had long believed than then, and to assure her that her prophecies of her apostacy were vain.

On the day previous to her death (Saturday) I visited her, and found her somewhat more easy than on the preceding evening. She expressed to me her longings to die, saying, "I never wanted any thing in my life so much as I want to die." And then in a moment she added, "To die is pleasant, I think." I remarked, that it is, if we look rightly on all things connected with it. She said

as thus that death was made pleasant to her.
eel," said she, "that I could lie still and die
out uttering one word. I long to die—it
as if I could not wait my time." Desiring
o pray, I asked her if she had any thing in
icular for which she wished me to pray?
er shall I forget the sweet placidness of her
itenance as she summoned all her strength to
mand her trembling nerves, and uttered these
ds—"Pray that my aged father and mother
be strengthened in the doctrine that sustains
that my husband, whom I must leave be-
l, may take good care of the children; that I
have strength given me to bear all that I
t bear." After prayer, she spoke of the joy
had derived from sitting at her chamber win-
, when she could not go out, and listening to
services of the sanctuary—her house being
a short distance from the church of her choice
love. The tones of the hymns of praise, the
rance of prayer, and the voice of the preacher,
ing to her ear softened by the distance, had a
iliar charm, and delicious was her enjoy-
t.

he remarked that she had deeply desired,
hrough her sickness, to hear singing. She
ied to renew those holy and happy hours. I
ted several of her friends to visit her, for the
ose of gratifying this desire. They went—
standing at the foot of the stairs that led to
room, sang,

w cheering the thought that the spirits in bliss
ill bow their bright wings to a world such as this,
ill leave the bright mansions of glory above,
breathe o'er our spirits some message of love"—

"Rise my soul, and stretch thy wings,
Thy better portion trace,
Rise from transitory things,
Towards heaven, thy native place;"

"One there is above all others
Well deserves the name of friend;
His is love beyond a brother's,
Costly, free, and knows no end.
They who once his kindness prove,
Find it everlasting love;"—

together with several others. Her soul wa
lighted and elevated, and she expressed her
pleasure with the service of song. Whe
friends were retiring, she desired they v
come again and "bring more." "I want,'
she, "to hear more such appropriate tunes
hymns." Her soul desired many voices
much of song to express its satisfaction i
hopes of the gospel. But she was not able
to hear earthly songs. She was soon to b
raptured with the harps of seraphim. She
without a struggle, her spirit reposing in the
of heaven.

I will turn remembrance but to one
scene. It is one where age is departing
the subject was for some years a member c
Baptist church. He was once bitterly op
to Universalism, but by degrees his dislike
away, and he was found quite constantly vi
our church. The fatal sickness came sudc
and he sent for me. Gladly I attended hin
found him somewhat agitated, but yet sel
sessed enough to converse. His spirit wa

ginning to repose itself in calm confidence in Illimitable Love; and soon he had no choice between life and death, fully resigned to the will of God. He died peacefully, because full of comforting faith and hope.

These all died in faith—in *the* faith. I could give as eloquent recitals of others, over whom I have lifted the prayer, giving them to God, and who died as hopefully. But I have recorded enough, and no more let the slander be heard that Universalism will not support the soul in death. It alone is the true Comforter, for it can alone permit the dying to say to all weeping friends—"We meet again—in heaven!" With its power in the heart, the dying mother, as she gathers her sorrowing children around her, can speak of soul-comforting hopes. In humble thankfulness and devout reverence, she will whisper of the re-unions of heaven, while she feels that God will of a certainty give answer to the deep prayer of her pleading spirit—"Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am." Heaven is heaven to her soul, because she trusts it is the home of all her loves—that there will be rejoicing without weeping; and as one by one she welcomes there her children, the glory of her joy will be that the new birth is to a world of purity—that the anxieties that here oppress and torture, will be felt there no more, and amid the infinite manifestations of affection towards them, she will never be required to give the kiss of farewell. O this, this is a mother's joy—a mother's triumph! Without it, how dark and fearful must be the dying hour! how bitter earth's farewells! how

agonizing the last looks upon the beloved children!

And as it is with the mother, so it is with all who deeply and truly love. Love, love pleads with "groanings that cannot be uttered" for the firm trust in the presence of the beloved mingling with the glories of heaven—that in the high and everlasting home, the dear in this life will live, and there the fervency of the spirit's praise will be given by their presence. Love pleads with Love. It will have its petition answered. Shall we doubt it?

"The love that lived through all the stormy past,
And meekly with the harsher nature bore,
And deeper grew, and tenderer to the last,
Shall it expire with life, and be no more?"

Glorious beyond utterance is the vision given of the redemption of humanity complete—the liberation of every soul—the purification of every heart. There is a sublimity in the thoughts awakened that no other faith can create, and a joy that is indeed unspeakable and full of glory!

PRAYER WITH THANKSGIVING.

"Oh! when the heart is full, when bitter thoughts
Come crowding thickly up for utterance,
And the poor common words of courtesy
Are such a very mockery, how much
The bursting heart may pour itself in prayer!"

In introducing here the subject of Prayer, I feel it a duty to first remark against the common practice of founding reasons for its exercise simply on the soul's wants in seasons of trouble and distress, and limiting to this portion of human experience persuasives to the pious practice. It hath its mission to the glad and buoyant heart. It hath sympathy therewith, and brings down upon enjoyments a sanctity that makes their happiness more like blessedness. And it is by the reception and friendly attentions to Prayer, as a kind messenger from God, in the times and seasons of happiness, that it is rendered powerful in the hour of grief. Thereby it is made a familiar companion, and, like a true friend, its worth is most clearly revealed in the season of darkness and gloom. But they who shun it in health and gladness, find themselves at a loss how to acquaint themselves with its divine power to comfort and console, when comfort and consolation are needed.

A popular writer hath represented a lovely and devotional being, whose life was spiritual love, as

addressing her beloved thus in a letter,—"I passed into the little garden, that with your own hands you have planted for me, and filled with flowers. Ellinor was with me, and she saw my lips move. She asked me what I was saying to myself. I would not tell her—I was praying for you, my kind, my beloved Eugene. I was praying for the happiness of your future years—praying that I might requite your love. Whenever I feel the most, I am the most inclined to prayer. Sorrow, joy, tenderness, all emotion, lift up my heart to God. And what a delicious overflow of the heart is prayer! When I am with you—and I feel that you love me—my happiness would be painful, if there were no God whom I might bless for its excess." Such a soul understood and experienced the true nature and power of the spiritual exercise. Such a soul needed to know the source of her blessings, as well as the source of comfort in sorrow, and when grief came, the strengthening angel was not afar off. Prayer born in the soul from gratitude, is always mighty to comfort in adversity; as we go with joy to those who have been our friends in the past, when we need again the aid of friendship.

True prayer is a spiritual exercise, "uttered, or unexpressed." It is the upward tendency of the thoughts to that Being who causes all things to work together for the final good of his creatures, and who makes even the wrath of man to praise him. They bring down from heaven peace upon the soul. And however mysterious to us, God hath ordained an intimate connection between its exercise and the enjoyment of the best spiritual blessings. Experience can best test this truth—

thousands have thus tested it, and felt "what a delicious overflow of the heart is prayer!" God hath commanded it; Christ hath enjoined it and given us the right example and model; good men have traced to it the greatest and best of their blessings; it strengthens the best affections, gives fervency to faith and hope, and is the natu ral language of a dependent and needful being. These are a few of the persuasives to its practice, while its philosophy must remain, as it is, a se cret with God. He is the absolute and perfect sovereign. With him there are no unalterable laws to prevent the execution of a purpose; and if he has assured the soul of blessings through the medium of prayer, there is nothing in the universe on which can be founded the least rea- son against the exercise. Christ believed God to be unchangeable and yet he prayed. The Apos- tle James asserted the same truth, and yet he ex- horts—"Is any among you afflicted? let him pray." All the inspired servants of God have exhorted to it. And they who have reposed the deepest confidence in the perfect wisdom and harmony of the Deity's operations, have the most continuously honored the call to prayer. That soul is proud in its own wisdom that slights the divine invitation, and a prayerless spirit is the least happy of all the spirits in the creation of God. It hath been made a *duty*, and neglect must cause a loss of good; especially as prayer is an instinct of the soul—a want of the spirit, and calls to prayer are heard on every side. It is the most natural and grateful of all the exercises of devotion—yea, without it, what is devotion? And without it, what fervency of love can the

soul ever have? It can open an avenue in the heart for the entrance of comfort and peace, nothing else can. Set not Prayer aside because of its mysteries. What is there powerful to affect the soul, that is not mysterious? Thought creates worlds within a world; but how do we think? The will is the mainspring of all power; how acts the will on the organs of the body? Yet, wrapped in mysteries as they are, enough is plain to make us adore the wisdom and goodness of the all Originating Mind! So it is with Prayer.

"Darkly we move—we press upon the brink
Haply of viewless worlds, and know it not;
Yes, it may be, that nearer than we think
Are those whom death has parted from our lot!
Fearfully, wondrously, our souls are made—
Let us walk humbly on, but undismayed!

Humbly—for knowledge strives in vain to feel
Her way amid these marvels of the mind;
Yet undismayed—for do they not reveal
Th' immortal being with our dust entwined?—
So let us deem! and e'en the tears they wake
Shall then be blest for that high nature's sake.

Commending the benefits of prayer to the reader as abounding to the soul in every time of trouble, I give attention to consider for the reader's benefit a peculiar expression of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Philippians;—"In every thing"—or case of need and trial—"by prayer and supplication, *with thanksgiving*, let your requests be made known unto God." The idea of the phrase—"with thanksgiving," is, that thankfulness for past mercies is indispensable to give us the right frame of mind and disposition of heart to pray and supplicate. This is an im-

portant consideration, and is to be remembered. When we pray, we must, if we would profit thereby, have the spirit of thankfulness—thankfulness for the knowledge of a God to go to, for the privilege of approaching him, for the gracious encouragements, for the hopes left us, and for a heart that can feel it is good to draw nigh unto the Father of mercies and God of all comfort. Thankfulness for the affection and tenderness of that name—the name of Jesus!—through which we are permitted to approach the throne of grace, and that our Advocate can be and is touched with a feeling of our infirmities. Thankfulness for the many recorded examples of the benefits of prayer, and how God has made the exercise the medium of bringing the soul into that conformity with his divine will which is the greatest of all blessings. Thankfulness that

> "E'en the silent breathing
> Of thy spirit raised above,
> Will reach his throne of glory,
> Who is Mercy, Truth, and Love!"

To be thankful for what is spared, is well said to be the first thought that should rise in our minds after a calamity; and he to whom it is applicable, has a happy frame of mind, and will always look on the most grateful side of affairs; he will have an elasticity of spirits truly great, and will rise from heavy depression with new vigor, like the phœnix from the ashes of the ruins of fire. A constant remembrance of God's mercies towards us in past times, will cause us,

1. *To extol his goodness.* We are too apt to merely acknowledge that God is good to us with-

out thinking of the meaning of our language—without making it a heart truth by calling up the evidences of it by particulars, or contemplating our lives with reference to proofs of the fact. We need oftener to think over the specific reasons *why* we should acknowledge that God is good to us, so that it be not a mere assent of the intellect, but a feeling of grateful affection.—We can perceive the distinction here made by considering the often repeated testimonials of the worth of earthly friends; for instance, the declaration, My mother has been good to me! There is much in that expression, and we mean it all; but should we not feel it more did we run over in our mind, by the aid of memory, some of the specific reasons for this testimony to her worth, than to speak of the past in the aggregate? Certainly we should. The particular remembrance of one season of sickness, when the ministering tenderness of her faithful and untiring love left no want that could be supplied, unsatisfied, would call up a thousand dear and hallowed memories, and the tear of grateful feeling would well up into our eye, while with great force we should feel *why* we should acknowledge the goodness of our mother, and the poet's language would be ours—

"When we are sick, where can we turn for succor,
When we are wretched, where can we complain;
And when the world looks cold and surly on us,
Where can we go to meet a warmer eye
With such confidence as to a mother?"

This confidence is born amid the reminiscences of her past sympathy and kindness;

of days gone by tell what we may expect in the future, and as we count over the manifestations of her unfaltering love and devotion towards us, we extol her goodness and praise our mother. So a remembrance of the mercies of God—the tracing up to him the blessings of the seasons, the beauties of nature, the love that lives and burns in the hearts of others towards us, and all the comforts that come from his merciful provisions in nature, will cause us to extol his goodness, as we never shall by considering them in the aggregate—as a whole. We are too much kept from extolling our Maker's goodness by the secondary causes by which his mercies are conveyed to us, which should be guarded against, as it is ungrateful,—it is as though we should bless the cup we drink from, rather than the kind hand by whom its refreshing contents were prepared for us.

2. A constant remembrance of God's mercies *would tend to encourage us in seasons of depression.* When we have once been delivered from a fearful disease by the skill and attention of a physician, we have encouragement when again in the like situation that he will help us. We have great confidence in him, we give up ourselves into his hands without distrust, and are cheered by the thought that we are still within the circle of his practice and that he is near us. So it is with the being who rightly remembers the past mercies of God when in trouble. He looks back and feels that the God who has delivered him from six troubles will not forsake him in the seventh, and is rejoiced to feel that the same providence reigns—that he is under the same care

as in past years—that the circle of God's mercies is not limited. And as we look back upon the past, do we not call up the memories of how we have been wonderfully sustained and carried through trials, most afflicting even to think of? has not God made our strength equal to our day of toil and sorrow, and have we not been favored with upholding power when the observer would think that we must give up in despair or weakness? And shall we doubt for the future? shall we ungratefully set aside the holy lesson of the past, and so fill our hearts with anxious cares as to exclude the remembrance of Him who has proved a very present help in every time of trouble? No, no; let the mercies of the past encourage us to trust in good in the future, and so read the past that with another we can say—

"If on my life's eventful maze
The fitful glance I throw,
Which calls to mind my former days,
With all their joy or woe,—
Though here the cloud may darkly lead,
And there the fire may move,
Inscribed on each I still can read
My Father-God is Love."

3. A constant remembrance of God's mercies *will afford the strongest and best incitements to duty.* When were we ever faithful to God and not rewarded? When did we ever make a sacrifice to principle, and did not have it made up to us by elevation of feeling in the consciousness of having done right, and in the thought of how we should have degraded ourselves in our own eyes and the view of the good had we yielded our rectitude and integrity to the temptation? The

Judge of the whole earth has thus rewarded in the secret recesses of the soul all our obedience to him, and has added innumerable unmerited blessings. We never earned one tithe of the love that is poured upon us; and the thousand pleasures which steal into the soul through the senses from the beautiful and pleasant things in nature, are so many testimonies of our Maker's free grace and bounty. We never merited the blessing of having the heavens so lovely, the flowers so rich and fragrant, and the beautiful so blended with the useful in the round of the seasons. There is beauty and music in the rain, and hail, and snow, as they come down from the clouds through the warm or cold air, and there is loveliness in the rising of the sun, and its setting; in the radiant dew, and the hoar frost as it glitters on the hill and plain, and in the moon and stars, —because God is good and loveth us; for they were all ordained thus before we had a being save in the purpose of the Deity.—How much there is in this thought to incline us to obey him? Rewards and gifts, bountiful and satisfying! Surely if rich and tender gifts from fellow mortals incline us to their service, we should direct the same feelings towards God, and be faithful to his will.

And shall we not be faithful to the duty of prayer? It is rather a privilege than a duty, and should so be regarded. And what a holy privilege is it in times of grief and bereavement! How is the over-burdened heart eased by the utterance of its woes in the ear of friendship, conscious of the presence of true sympathy! In the exercise, the heart is brought into closer union

with the things of heaven and the troubled spirit is soothed, as was the Savior's in the last hour of preparation for death.

Thought and feeling are the elements of prayer, but we must not deny utterance thereto. The poet must have his pen, and the artist his pencil and colors, and the spirit of prayer speech. Expression strengthens and increases all emotion and feeling, as repression stifles and chills. As an, to me, unknown writer, hath eloquently and justly said;—"It is the great and universal law of nature, that expression strengthens thought and feeling. This explains why we need churches, and assemblies for united prayer—that the religious feelings may be deepened and strengthened. It tells us why the heart warms within us as we sit down to a desk to correspond with a dear distant friend. It tells us why we love the more after we have once expressed our love. Expression calls back thought on the feelings, and fixes it, and takes its impress in the mind and heart—makes it echo and reverberate like sound in the deep chambers of the soul, till we have caught the *key note* of the new harmony that comes chiming in upon us. The linked sweetness is drawn out, as we pause and ponder upon that which gave it rise. Like some glorious opening flower, we stand and gaze upon its unfolding vision, as it grows more and more strong and beautiful, in all its delicate tints and shadings—in all its rare and majestic proportions. Without words—without pen, ink, and paper, these thoughts might vanish all unnoticed or unremembered. These outward signs form a scaffolding for the fairer and more durable structure

within—and give a local habitation and a name to the erratic, volatile spirit of the soul."

If we have the power to speak, should we not use it in prayer—in secret prayer? The act of utterance will serve to concentrate our feelings and thoughts the more, and the words uttered will re-act upon the mind through hearing by awakening new ideas and suggesting new trains of thought. Our Master prayed audibly—he gave a word-prayer. We cannot, therefore, be safe in neglecting the duty of utterance, but shall find good in obedience. Again we repeat—"Is any afflicted? let him pray."

PERSUASIVES AGAINST EXCESSIVE GRIEF.

> "There oft is found an avarice in grief;
> And the wan eye of sorrow loves to gaze
> Upon its secret hoards of treasured woes,
> In pining solitude."

When first the weight of a heavy affliction comes upon us, it is no marvel that the pressure should bend us to the earth, and deprive us of the exercise of our wonted strength. That we should weep, and perhaps bitterly, is natural, and religion does not rebuke our tears, nor should any mortal being take upon himself that office. Yet we should, when the first deep flow of feeling is past, think of Duty—of our relations in life, and the persuasives against excessive grief. And that grief is excessive which begets a disinclination towards active and important duties, cheerful society, and shadows the countenance with a gloom that cannot be dissipated by the sunshine of life and the tenderest efforts of friendship. It will not do for us to deem our sorrows unlike any that mortals ever felt, and rest there an apology for our grief; and give to fancy free power to draw around us every form of wretchedness as haunting spirits, clothing our affliction with the most terrible garments and powers. Our reason should not be forgotten. Our duty to act as rational beings, endowed with capacities to take hold of the promises

of good, should be remembered. And from us should never be put the important truth, that our course affects others—that we may fill them with sorrow through sympathy for us, or give them a spiritual lesson of great value in the example of resignation, and the remembrance of good amid evil.

Religious gratitude is a strong persuasive against excessive grief. If we have possessed a great good, it teaches us from whom it came; if it is taken away, it teaches thankfulness for the possession for the time—for all the pleasant feelings awakened by it, the affections drawn out towards it, and the sweet memories associated with it. These affections, feelings, and memories, forbid us to regret that it was ever given, and why should we claim to have it longer continued to us? Was it outward possessions, a dear child, a venerated parent, a beloved partner, an esteemed friend, and dost thou wish the lost returned that thou mayest more rightly appreciate it and improve by it? Do not so waste feeling upon unavailing wishes, as to lose the teachings of this regret—to be faithful to what is around and before thee, and appreciate present and approaching good while it is thine. Do not add through excessive sorrow regret to regret. Remember the future will recall the passing present, and as thou now doest, so will the comfort or sorrow of memory be. Let then the language of thy heart be kindred to hers who said—

"I will arise
And go with joy about my household cares,
And give my soul to peace."

Our social affections and sympathies persuade

us to restrain excessive grief. "No man liveth to himself," is the language of scripture and experience. What we are, affects others; and if we shut ourselves up in our own feelings, regardless of what others must feel through our selfishness, we are indeed unfaithful to the thousand teachers of duty around us, and negligent of all the gentle charities of domestic and social life; the silent language of settled gloom, of aversion to mingling where the smiles of cheerfulness would bless, and the selection of themes for conversation and reading which keep the mind dwelling on shadows, tell the friends who love us, and who would soothe, how sorrow pervades our whole being, though one word of complaint is never utterred, or one tear shed in their sight. And is it nothing that thus we sadden them? that we touch their sympathies only to grieve? that we mingle our sorrows continually with those that are peculiarly their own, instead of infusing into their hearts the sweet influence of cheerful submission to life's evils? Our sympathies should not all be given to the dead, or the lost good. The living and feeling friends and associates around us, should be remembered. Our example—its character and power, should be considered, and thought should tell us not simply of our own bereavement or affliction, but of the high sources of consolation, and the relations and duties of our social being. If we have buried much in the tomb, we may bury much more in the grave of selfish grief;—

"Those gentler charities which draw
Man closer with his kind—
Those sweet humanities which make
The music which they find."

The calls of usefulness persuade us to control excessive grief. We were born to do good—to ourselves and to others. This truth is written on our whole being, and enjoined in every commandment of God. In doing good, we get good. Without exhausting in the least our own treasury, we let out the most productive wealth. The more we do good, the more we shall feel the practicability of the example of Christ, the more spiritual strength we shall have, and the more perfect will be the sovereignty of the morally mental over the betraying sensual. Indeed, the best way to get good, is to do good; for it yields satisfaction in a threefold manner—in the conception, execution, and retrospection. But how do we forget all this through the indulgence of excessive grief? We forget life's great aims—we bury our talents and mourn in inactivity that we have no more. This should not be. We cannot justify it. We must suffer from it.

"Wouldst thou from sorrow find a sweet relief?
Or is thy heart oppressed with woes untold?
Balm wouldst thou gather for corroding grief?
Pour blessings round thee like a shower of gold.

'T is when the rose is wrapped in many a fold,
Close to its heart, the worm is wasting there
Its life and beauty; not when, all unrolled,
Leaf after leaf, its bosom, rich and fair,
Breathes its perfumes throughout the ambient air.
Rouse to some work of high and holy love,
And thou an angel's happiness shall prove."

MORAL VALUE OF THE HOPE OF A FUTURE LIFE.

"*So* grant me, God, from every care
And stain of passion free,
Aloft, through virtue's purer air,
To hold my course to Thee:—
No sin to cloud, no lure to stay
My soul, as home she springs;
Thy sunshine on her joyful way,
Thy freedom in her wings."

WHAT is the history of Progress, as traced out in human annals, but a series of examples of the noble bearing of trials and evils? Wherever the revelations of the martyr spirit are seen, the steady maintenance of right against wrong exhibited, or the patient waiting for the better day manifested, there do we behold the fruits of the exercise of the inward power of the soul to sustain outward infirmity and affliction, and which may be more and more developed by every human being. We have sympathies which draw out admiration toward the illustrious spirits who have nobly met and borne the severest trials. The little image of the crucified Jesus on the tiny cross, has been a magical charm to direct the thoughts of the sufferer to high and holy contemplations, till fancy has brought out in vividness the whole of the dreadful scene on Calvary, and the tears of sympathy flood the eyes that before were weeping other and less sanctified tears.

The many voices from the sacred mount are heard, and the spirit of calm endurance is waked up to stronger and more noble exertion. This was the reason why the Apostle exhorted his brethren—"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind; for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin," or from being harmed by the wickedness of man. "Arm yourselves with the same mind!" is a call to noble effort, for what an armor of light was the mind of Christ, and what a glorious victor did it make him! He prepared for trial; when it came, it found him guarded, and it never overwhelmed. So may it be with the disciple who will continue in the belief and practice of his word. The "joy set before him" will ever animate and cheer; earth may be dark, but heaven will be bright to his vision; earthly riches and friends may disappear, but he has durable treasure and glorious loves that never vanish; and when death comes, he will count it gain to depart and be with Christ.

It was so with the Apostle Paul; and in his history, the moral value of the doctrine of the Resurrection is most clearly exhibited. Paul had met all and braved all that he did meet and brave, to preach Christ crucified—the risen Savior and the hope of man. This to him was a truth, and the greatest and best of all truths; and in the strength it imparted, he labored and suffered. The joy thus set before him, was the spirit of ceaseless vigor, and he could "rejoice always," abound or suffer need as Providence ordered events.

But we are often told that the rewards of virtue in this life are sufficient to bind men, through all trials, to her service, without a reference to a hope of future existence. It may be so. Every feature of Virtue hath a divine beauty. Her faintest smile is richer than the chiefest charms of her foe, and all the art of the syren cannot equal the music of the least whispered of her approvals. Yet let it be remembered, that it is the hope of a future life which gives man a conscious elevation of character, an aspiring after good, and a love of the spiritual and the divine, that he otherwise does not have,—aye, that he otherwise *cannot* have. "Why is this?" may be the inquiry. I answer,—

1. Because it is this hope and assurance which make him realize that he is a spiritual, as well as a sensual being; that he is not only related to the earthly but to the heavenly, and the superiority of the eternal part of his nature is recognised and felt. Reason teaches him that he should not yield it to be triumphed over by that which relates him only to the animal kingdom, and in the strength of his immortality he feels power sufficient to resist evil and live for the noblest ends.

2. Because the promise of the future life, joy, and glory, appeals to his gratitude and sense of obligation, infinitely more than does the present. He acts upon the consciousness of being heir apparent to honors and blessings unutterably glorious, and acknowledges not only the visible and experienced rewards of virtue, but eternal riches of joy, he can never merit or claim by any deeds or labors, freely vouchsafed to him by grace. In

the most noble manner, the principle of gratitude is excited—that principle from which springs the most honorable efforts of man.

Thus we see the justification of the Apostle when he deemed a belief in, and active assurance of, a future life necessary to give a high aim and purpose to the mind of man, to raise him above the influence of sensualism, and make him to live in sympathy with the ministry of pure and loving angels.

When we speak of the rewards of virtue in the present being sufficient to bind men to her service, without looking beyond this life, we should never forget the solemn fact that it is because we were created to be heirs of everlasting joy, that virtue has so rich earthly rewards. It is because we are related to God and eternity—because he has given to us of his spirit, that virtue is our healthy and happy element; and in all the proofs of our purest and best enjoyment being found in the service of virtue, we see evidences of our relation to God and that our spiritual nature makes us heirs of heaven. Take away the consciousness that heaven is our home, and the visible perplexities of life in times of trial would oftentime overwhelm, and crush all power of resisting evil. We want religious hope—confidence in a happy immortality, to strengthen the heart and keep it true to duty—to go with it through trials and sorrows, and lift up our eyes to heaven when our spirit faints and our feet stumble on the dark mountains.

In the strength of the clear, distinct and full hope of immortality, the Apostle who treated most of this hope, resisted all the allurements of

the world—had cast aside all pride of heart, and came from the lofty to associate with the lowly; and in yielding rank, wealth, and all the accompaniments of elevated and refined life, as the world judgeth, he felt his gain greater than his loss by his knowledge of the resurrection according to Christ. This knowledge to him was certain riches, durable honor, and lasting dignity. It enabled him to look clearly and understandingly on the beauty of Jesus in his mortal and resurrection glory, and drew out the admiration of his soul towards him as he went about doing good, and as the mediator between God and man to reconcile all things to the Father. This made him willing both to labor and suffer reproach, to spend and be spent, and to count it all joy to die in the defence of the great cause of Christ and humanity.

And so it may with us. Confident I am, that according as we realize fully and truly our immortal heritage—feel that we are born for heaven, we shall become freed from the sensual philosophy, and shall live not to eat and drink as the foolish, but eat and drink to live as the wise; laboring not simply for the day's advantage and selfish interest, but for social good and future benefit to mankind. The more our souls are given up to such a course of life, the more will the deep meaning of the servant of Christ's language be understood and felt,—"We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made

manifest in our body. *Knowing* that He who raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus—by his own power. Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding, eternal weight of glory; *while* we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

MUSIC AT THE DEATH BED.

"Bring music! stir the brooding air
With an ethereal breath!
Bring sounds my struggling soul to bear
Up from the couch of death!"

DISEASE had well nigh done its work—the flame but glimmered in the socket—one moment more, and it would be out! The dying girl by a waving hand called her sister to her side and faintly breathed a wish for her to sing—to sing some sweet melody, that she might leave earth with the tones of inspiring music lingering on her ear. "And what, dear sister, do you choose for me to sing?" "Sing, Harriet, my favorite—I leave earth willingly!" said the dying maiden. The sister well knew her choice, and she sat down to the instrument and brought forth its sweetest and softest tones; they were indeed born of heaven, for her emotions gave an unwonted skill to her effort, as she aimed to soothe the wearied one to a refreshing sleep. Her song breathed forth the elevated thoughts of a dying Christian—dying in youth, surrounded with friends and abundant blessings, and yet ready and willing to depart. The gathered group looked on her with sacred awe, for they felt themselves in the presence of a being of another

world, who was soon to know the mystery of death. What a calm and beautiful expression was on her countenance! What a glow was on her cheek—what a brilliancy was in her eye, as the notes of the favorite song rose sweet and clear, and seemed to float around the couch of the dying! O how inestimable is that religion, whose glorious hopes enabled her to wear a heavenly smile at the last moment, and show, by the animation of her dying features, that she felt in her soul the words that were uttered by her sister, though she herself could not speak them! And she died as the sister repeated—

"I would not live alway, away from my God,
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode!
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er the bright plains,
And the noontide of glory eternally reigns!"

The notes lingered after the spirit's departure, for on the wings of song it had soared to heaven!

There was much to wean thee away, fair sister of the gentle speech and tender eye. "Storm after storm" did, indeed, "rise dark o'er thy way," and heaven was fairer to thee than earth. And when the pale conqueror shall come to bear me from this shadowy world, may thy sweet cheerfulness be mine, and some gentle one sing me to sleep as thou wert sung. Sweet sister! how well thou now knowest that we part from earth's melodies, for the purer and nobler harmonies of heaven! Here, music hath a wondrous power; there it will exert a mightier; and O what glorious melody shall fill immensity, when all the ransomed of the Lord who died for all, shall come to the heavenly Zion with songs

and everlasting joy! The bird sings its sweetest songs only in its native clime.

Let the sick and dying know the soothing power of gentle music. Why should we deny it to them? It hath oft a wondrous charm to hush the agitated feelings, and fit the mind to receive the spiritual comforts of the Gospel. The soul hath been transported to heaven, for the time it listened to sacred song, and more than one have I known who has felt what the poet hath said in reference to Music,—

> "Something of mystery there surely dwells,
> Waiting thy touch, in our bosom cells;
> Something that finds not its answer here—
> A chain to be clasped in another sphere.
> Speak! for thou tellest my soul that its birth
> Links it with regions more bright than earth."

Bring music to the sick and wearied. Keep it not entirely for the hours of gladness and the children of joy, but let its softest and sweetest notes be breathed around the bed of death. It will attract angels there, while it sings the blest hopes of the believing heart. And let it never breathe aught but hope—hope in the inexhaustible love of our heavenly Father—hope in the blessedness of heaven—hope in the re-unions of that happy sphere of being! O music was never made to breathe aught else. This is its religion—this is its divinity—this is what makes it in earth and heaven the same. What a song were that of distrust to be sung in heaven! It were indeed a reproach upon the blessed God, and it is wherever it is sung. Let us never sing it.

Angels of sacred and trustful song! hover, O

hover over and around the dying. Come near to our sister—draw nigh to our brother—let the dying father and the departing mother—the early stricken wife, and the too soon called husband—the fading youth, and the blighted child,—all feel thy marvellous charms. Whisper to them the melodies of heaven. Come and sing to them in pleasant dreams; and tell them, with the sweet voice of song, of our Father's kindness and mercy, till the wrapt soul shall forget the shadows around it, and, joyous in its own light, be ready to go unshrinkingly to the eternal home, where the harps of eternity will be found to echo no strains of earth that have not sympathy with the sacred song—

"God's own soft hand shall wipe the tears
From every weeping eye;
And pains and groans, and griefs and fears,
And death itself shall die."

GOD'S GOODNESS OF DESIGN.

"The man
That could surround the sum of things, and spy
The heart of God, and secrets of his empire,
Would speak but love; with him the bright result
Would change the hue of intermediate scenes,
And make one thing of all theology!"

THERE is in affliction and bereavement a strange power that causes us to dwell on the mysteries with which we are surrounded, and thought fixed on these does but weaken the mind the more, instead of imparting to it strength to bear up under the pressure of grief. It is wise for us, therefore, to recal at such seasons some of the clear and unquestionable evidences of our Creator's benevolence, so that we may be inclined to trust rather than doubt. What a theme for such a purpose is given in the language of the Deity, by his prophet Jeremiah, concerning the chosen people—"I will rejoice over them to do them good." Here the great Father hath kindly manifested his interest in the children of his power, even though they strayed from duty, and hath condescended to represent himself as being exercised by rejoicing in bestowing good upon them. What he said of his love for Israel, is no less true concerning his love for all; and many and precious are the evidences that he rejoiceth over us to do us good. There is rich comfort in

this assurance, for it not only asserts the most consoling truth, but by implication assures us that he rejoices in nothing opposite to doing good; for he is perfect, and consistency is essential to perfection. What riches of comfort does this truth contain! How well might hours on hours of thought be given to take in of its fulness, to appreciate more justly its worth, and to prepare ourselves for the work of familiarizing other minds with its solace! For if this truth be received—be folded in amid the warmest and truest affections, then in verity we shall permit mystery no more to disturb the calmness and sweetness of our thoughts of God, and shall be ever ready and able in affliction to take hold of the comforts of his grace and apply them.

When we would enliven our confidence in the great truth here referred to, we shall find aid by considering some particulars connected with the evidence thereof, as thereby the truth and its relations will be more distinct in the mind.

And first, we are assured that God delighteth to do us good from the benevolence of his nature. He is perfect. He is glorious. Man clothes himself with glory according as he diffuses good, and he is perfect according as his ways and means for extending good are separated from selfishness and really promotive of benefit. It is so—reverentially we write it—with God. When Moses desired a manifestation of the Deity's glory, the Almighty caused his goodness to pass before him, and the perfection of the attributes of his divinity insure to us the unlimited beneficial effects of his goodness. The final overthrow of all evil, and the extinction of all misery, can alone

maintain the glory of all the Divine perfections; for were one soul to be lost, there would be one spot on the sun of the Divine glory; increase the number, and you do but increase the darkening shades over that which is the light and beauty of heaven.

We are strengthened in our confident trust that God rejoiceth over us to do us good, according as we understand the wisdom of our organization. Benevolence is connected with every proof of design in our whole frame, and wonderfully are we constituted in harmony with the world we inhabit. The clearer science and philosophy unfold this harmony, the more evident are the proofs of the goodness of our Creator in our formation, and the more shall we discern the care of his wisdom to guard us from evils, and that where evils are permitted to reach us, they are designed for our highest good. More could not be done unless it were the design to make us angels instead of men. This goodness is seen the more as we go from the examination of our mortal mechanism to consider man's social nature, his intellectual capacities, and his religious aspirations and feelings. We cannot give any degree of due attention to consider these, without discovering the manifold proofs that the law of benevolence moulded and fashioned man—that God designed good in all that he made man and in all that he ever designed and now designs him to be.

Consider also the effects of obedience to the course of duty He has prescribed. Where is there one amid all the divine requirements that does not bring happiness to the obedient? Take

the whole decalogue part by part—scrutinize each and all, and see if there be any commandment that does not have an intimate connection with man's highest good in this life. All that man is, proves that he was made to be a religious being, and therefore his powers and capacities cannot bring to him the enjoyment he is privileged to partake of, unless he obeys the voice of religion. God's love, and man's best good, are written on the whole law of human duty.

This important consideration may be made to stand out in the mind more distinctly by giving a little thought to examine the means by which the Deity would guard us from transgressions. He has given us the most appalling exhibitions of the effects of sin, and the most melting intreaties to wander not in the paths of iniquity. He has inspired his servants to give to the effects of sin every name that can call up the most eloquent associations in the mind that tell of evil; and that teach us—that whatever we dread, to dread most of all—sin!

To all these demonstrations of his watchful kindness towards us, he has added "the great and exceeding precious promises" that tell of eternal good, that assure us his love ends not with this life, and that bid us repose the most unreserved confidence in the merciful issues of his dispensations.

And shall not these thoughts give sufficient and appropriate food to strengthen the mind and heart when the present dealings of the wise Sovereign with us seem dark and are fearful? Shall we permit our inner being to pine away, ahungered and athirst, in the time of trouble, when

such sweet meditations may be ours? Nay. In the dark hour, let us repose our trust in him to whom nothing is hid or mysterious, and who, while he grieveth the children of men, rejoices over them to do them good, and useth affliction as a means thereto.

"Even from the glories of his throne
He bends, to view this wandering ball;
Sees all, as if that all were one;
Loves one, as if that one were all;
Rolls the swift planets in their spheres,
And counts the sinner's lonely tears."

"WITH WHAT BODY SHALL THEY COME?'

THIS question existed in the human mind when Paul treated of the Resurrection, and doubtless in every mind which had thought of a future life before that time. Yet no voice has yet come down from the courts of heaven to fully satisfy curious man—to tell of the precise nature and qualities of the incorruptible body, and we must rest contented with the knowledge that it will be a glorious and powerful constitution, adapted to the free and full exercise of the mind and to the infinite progress of our divine nature.

"This earthly house of our tabernacle" must dissolve; but the spirit hath another home. The substance from which the spiritual body shall be made, must be superior to all the substances in the material universe, because of the qualities ascribed to it. Is it a marvel that we cannot understand its nature, when we remember that there are less subtle substances we cannot understand? and should we ask to comprehend the superior while we cannot the lesser? St. Paul seems to direct attention to this when he carries the reader from the vegetable to the animal kingdom, from thence to the celestial, and then from star to star, showing different degrees of excellence to exist between each class and in the varieties of each. What an infinite variety of bodies! Beginning with the little flower of the forest and rising to

the rolling worlds! Each body is adapted to the part assigned it in the great whole—each bears the impress of an all-wise hand—each is perfect for its time, place, and mission. God made them all. One thoughtful view of them, excludes from the mind every idea that would limit the exercise of the Creator's power, and causes it to own the immensity of his works. Can he not make bodies superior in glory to all of these—bodies more manifest with his wisdom, goodness and power? Shall we stop at the visible? Shall thought roam from star to star, and deem that it hath soared to the highest sublimity —that above it there are not more glorious bodies?

We know, or feel fully assured, that greater displays of the Deity would be seen in creation, if we had a finer and more powerful sense than the most exquisite aided by the instruments of art. To what perfection may the telescope yet be brought; and when its advance shall be as great beyond what it now is, as it at present is beyond the first invention, what a glorious field, now veiled, will be opened! So with the microscope. Now it discovers to us transparent bodies, so that the purple current can be seen running through the crystal veins, and a delicate beauty of form and structure is exhibited, beyond description rare and wonderful! Above, and below, and around us, on every side, there are bodies too exquisite to be cognizable by the senses, with all aids. Why then should we deem it aught but presumption, to aim to search out the precise nature of the heavenly body of the spirit? Paul carried the thoughtful inquirer to the stars, and

the inquirer were indeed dull, did he not learn to trust in perfection beyond. For the Apostle spake of incorruptible bodies, and what are the rolling worlds but perishable ones!

There are substances in nature—all around us, which we know but little of, and yet from which we can believe that bodies more glorious than man's here on earth, can be made. What is the substance of electricity? What is the matter of attraction? There are worlds on worlds revolving in space, confined in their orbits by the power of attraction or gravitation. This substance must fill up the voids between the worlds. How subtle that substance! What powers doth it possess! What displays of the wisdom and immensity of God doth it give! What glory is connected with it! And who knoweth that this is not the substance or material from which the spiritual or heavenly body is made? It is the most spiritual of any thing of which we can conceive—it hath the greatest power of any substance with which we are acquainted, and connected with it are the most marvellous exhibitions of the wisdom of the Godhead! From this can be created a body fit to clothe the undying spirit—robing it in garments of light, and possessed of qualities beyond our present conceptions great and glorious! That there are such bodies, is more than intimated by the Apostle's reference to the bodies in space, and then lifting thought to the home of the spirit. The glory of the terrestrial bodies is distinct from the glory of the celestial, and the glory of the earthly body is distinct from the glory of the heavenly; and all show forth the wisdom and power of God.

The infinite variety of bodies visible, the Apostle would have us to understand, forbids our setting any bounds to the power of God; and as each of these hath a glory or beauty, peculiarly its own, according to its class, so should we trust that the incorruptible body hath a glory of its own, according to the sphere of beatification in which the redeemed spirit shall exist and enjoy. All bodies are made according to the relations God hath ordained that they shall hold, and from this comes the harmony of creation. God's wisdom is seen in their construction, in the same ratio that these relations are understood and the adaptations thereto are discerned. God hath made man to be to his glory—a companion of angels—a brother of Jesus Christ. In his own time, the spirit shall be clothed with the body adapted to these relations, and it will have a glory unutterable and divine.

The Apostle, speaking of the present and future, says, "It is sown." What is meant by *it?* Is it not man—the spirit—that which is to be *unclothed*, and to be *clothed?* He must refer to something immaterial—distinct from the body; for in its connection with the body, it is spoken of under the similitude of a form distinct from the garments it wears. "The earthly house," to be dissolved, is one thing; the "building of God," the eternal house, is another thing; and is not the inhabitant distinct from both? If the spirit be not independent, how can it be likened—and inspiration hath so likened it—to an individual going from a perishing house to one perfect and beautiful? And is not the Jewish tabernacle, in the Wilderness, in contrast with the Temple in

the city, here alluded to, in the reference to the earthly and heavenly body? The beauty of the one being as far beneath the beauty of the other, as the earthly body is beneath the eternal loveliness of the heavenly.

The spirit is here encompassed with a changing and perishing body, as is the germinating principle in the seed by the body around it, and which body is decomposed by the surrounding influences, as is the body which now clothes the spirit. This spirit shall live in a new form in heaven, even as the germinating principle in the seed rises, clothed in a new form, from the earth, into the sunshine and air of a new life. *How* the new form of the seedling is created, we know not, save that it is formed by the action of principles ordained by the Deity. "God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body"—or a body that preserves the identity—wheat from any other grain, so that it is recognised and cared for accordingly by those to whom it is valuable. God will give to our friends bodies preserving their identity, so that we can recognise and enjoy them; even as we sow a variety of seed of favorite flowers, and when the new forms come forth to greet us, we know our favorite ones, and the associations that hallow them as the alphabet of love, make us live a new life of sacred pleasure. We can love thousands on thousands, but thousands on thousands cannot compensate us for the loss or absence of those.

We are then to understand that it is not given us to know what will be the precise nature—the substance or material, of the heavenly body. But

it will be, in comparison with our present body, spiritual—like the bodies of angels and Christ. Let us rest in trust in Him who forms and fashions as he pleases the bodies of those creatures he designs to execute his purposes, enjoy his love, and glorify his name. He changes them, as he deems best, from the grovelling worm to the gay and beautiful winged gem. From the dust of the earth, he formed the delicate and wonderful structure of the human body. From as apparently inadequate materials, he moulds most exquisite things. The mist that rises from the turbid pool, floats over our head, wearing the most beautiful colors, and winging its way in various shapes, all lovely to the eye and enrapturing to the admirer of the beautiful. They float in the upper sea, showing forth the glory of God, as clearly as the forms of seeming life, which sail through the lower sea, do the skill and mind of man. And are they not aerial ships—freighted with the richest blessings, and bearing from clime to clime the products of one, needed in the other? And who, unenlightened by philosophy, would deem that the mists of the miry land could be made to produce such beautiful forms—forms so glorious as to be called the "chariots" of God! Philosophy hath taught us this; and we have ill read revelation if we have not learned how much greater things the power of God will work for man—for the spirit of which he is the Father. Out of what he wills, he can form a body of wondrous power—of matchless beauty—of sublimity beyond thought—and adapted to the life of heaven. He will not breathe immortal life into a form adapted *only* to suffer.

A WALK IN MOUNT AUBURN.

"I thought it slept—
And yet its little bosom did not move."

In that holy and beautiful place for the mourner, Mount Auburn, where the very leaves seem to whisper of heaven, and the air to breathe angel melodies, there is much to teach of the calming influence of nature on the troubled heart. We have felt this influence more than we are apt to acknowledge, as it steals in upon the feelings almost insensibly. We have gone forth with a burdened heart from the retreat where are a thousand relics of departed love and joy, and the cheerfulness of nature, the smiles of the flowers, the garniture of the earth, the songs of the birds, and the freedom and life of the pure air, have entered with balmy power unconsciously, and cheerful thoughts have taken the place of sad ones, as gently as the weariness of day is put aside by the entrance of those celestial dreams, when again we twine hand in hand with the departed and are happy.

We are creatures of association. If we can fix our mind on some outward or inward object of pleasant thought, cheerful feelings will arise and cluster around it, and our heart will be weaned from sorrow. And the reverse must be

the case, if the mind's object be but sorrowful and gloomy.

Something like these reflections were in the mind of many who lately roamed through Mount Auburn, threading with calm and holy pleasure its walks, and pausing here and there as different spots, monuments, and inscriptions attracted their attention. How different the religion of the place, than of many a burial ground! Here are not to be found at every step the rudely sculptured death's head, and the horrid eyeless skull, with jaws distended so as to throw out into bold relief the bony teeth. Nor Time, with his sharp and ugly features and resistless and huge scythe, bending by the hour-glass, whose sands are near run out, as though he were hastening the work of death, as the mower does his work when the sun is sinking from sight in the west. But here more cheerful thoughts of death are manifested. There are more emblems of thought which bid the mind approach a happy beyond the grave. And at every step we are reminded of how common it is to man to wish something like what the Rev. Walter Colton in his journal expresses—"Would that there were some absolving soil, through which we might all pass, at last, purified, to the better country." Sin does enough in this world, without wishing its conquests extended. It is too fierce an enemy to be immortal. And many a hope do we meet with here, that eternity will give to man a victory indeed, which hope gives the spirit of cheerfulness to the thoughts of death. Therefore when we meet the ancient emblem of life consuming itself—a burning torch reversed—we find over it

a floating butterfly placed—the type of the immortal, teaching us that time consumes not the life of the spirit.

The many to whom allusion has been made, drew successively near to a new and *unique* monument. It is constructed of white marble, polished and pure, as innocence with refinement. Beneath a roof, supported by columns, lies a most beautifully sculptured form of a young child, reposing in quiet slumber, a heavenly expression on its countenance, and its little arms lying in sweet repose. A moment's sight fills the heart with deep emotions; and how much more christian is such a memento of a departed one, than some image that tells only of death—death—perishable materiality! That sweet expression is a type of the angel's smile—the repose and joy of heaven. Around that type of loveliness the thoughts of the bereaved cluster, and fixed in their minds remains that which is immortal—the beauty of innocence.

Sorrowing mother! as thought turns your eye to look into the tomb of your child in your own heart, can you not have there as beautiful and sweet an image, rather than a perishing one, telling only of death! Let christian faith sculpture it for thee. Let it lie there an image of the peace of heaven. And as thou dwellest in thought upon its beauty, remember that soon thou wilt pass from the image to enjoy the reality. God comfort and strengthen thee till then!

AFTER THOUGHTS ON THE RE-UNION AND RECOGNITION OF FRIENDS.

"Yes, yes; the heart, in all its change,
Adds vigor and depth to love."

WHENEVER the doctrine of the recognition and re-union of friends in a future state is treated of in connection with the idea of a limited redemption, a question has always arose in reference to the social relations which here exist between the good and the evil—how the saints can be happy with the knowledge of the misery of their wicked relations? The invariable answer to this question has been, that that portion of memory which connects the good with the evil will be annihilated, and therefore the good will cease to have any sympathy for the evil whom here they may have loved.

Let us examine this. What is our consciousness but memory? And if one part may be blotted out, why may we not fear that the whole may be, as our memories are so linked in and connected with each other, that one is related to thousands, and on the existence of one depends the existence of many? If a part of the mind may be annihilated, then the mind is not immortal—it is only partly so, and our confidence is shaken in reference to the perpetuity of our

mental nature; and we are at a loss to decide whether our consciousness will be preserved in the future or not. If it is not—there is no future world for us—there is no immortality. We may exist, but it will be no more our individuality, than the bays that spring from the dust of Virgil's mouldering body, are Virgil, the poet's self. The future being will be entirely a new being, as much as this present existence is distinct from nonentity; for were we to assert that our souls have existed in previous states of being, as Pythagoras did, we must allow we have no consciousness of those existences, and therefore they are with us as though they never had been. Memory is Identity. Our bodies have entirely changed within the past ten years, and yet we have memories relating to previous times. Blot out those memories, and the mind may be said, and justly, to have died with the body. Therefore it is a solemn and a fearful thing, to talk of annihilating a part of memory.

But the scriptures give no authority for such a doctrine. They no where teach us that memory will be annihilated; but in all that they teach of a resurrection, they teach of the preservation of memory; for the christian resurrection is not a new creation, but the freedom and exaltation of the mind.

Supposing we were to allow that the good in heaven forget all the relations that here bound them to the evil, should we not take from them the very glory of their character? For what is the glory of human nature or character, but benevolence—its sympathy with suffering—its compassion for guilt? With it, how noble and

glorious has man made himself to be! Without it, how mean and despicable has he become! Look on Howard. What is it that makes the name of John Howard so eloquent—so suggestive of all that tells of the beauty of self-sacrifice in the cause of benevolence, and awakens reverence in our heart of hearts towards the man? It is because he left his home—spent himself and his substance in devotion to the interests of the debased and guilty, and actually died a martyr to his compassion for the criminal and the forsaken. Blot out that portion of Howard's life, and where is the glory of his character? The eloquence departs from his name, for it has no hallowed associations, and one of the brightest illustrations of the power of benevolence is lost. And what is it to deny to the redeemed the knowledge of relations with the evil, but to take from them the chief excellence of their character—that which makes us love and admire them? It is to make heaven the very temple of selfishness—to shut up the inhabitants in their own joys—to deny them expansive sympathy and limitless affection, and to make them ignorant of human guilt in those in whose veins runs kindred blood, lest they be made unhappy! What a heaven is that! How little corresponding with the wants of the soul—the desires of the heart! How reproachful to the character of God as the Universal Father!

John Howard we trust is in heaven. None will deny the reasonableness of that hope. But if from his memory is blotted out all recollection of the evil ones he had compassion for here—is not the richest portion of his mind annihilated? If there he have no sympathy for the sinful—no

ardent desires for the deliverance of the many from sin as he had on earth, and if there he sends up to the throne no fervent pleadings for such,—is John Howard, as we love to think of and reverence him, in heaven? He is not there—a part—and that not the best—of his mind only is there. The philanthropist is not there—the friend of the prisoners is not there—the compassionate benefactor of the guilty is not there. These noble characters died with him in the grave—were buried with his dust. In heaven he is as he was, in one sense, in his own home, ere the cry of the prisoner came to his ear. He has not the heart he afterwards had. His affections, sympathies, and efforts, are confined to his own—to those near him, and the heart that beat for suffering, though guilty, humanity every where, is no more his. In heaven he has a less generous and noble affection than on earth. A strange change has come over his spirit, and we cannot, if we would, reverence him as we do when we read his earthly history. We must not look up from earth to heaven, lest we cease to venerate his character. O what a thought is that!

The same must be our feelings in reference to all like characters. It is a holy sight to see a mother clinging to her betrayed and sinful son; year after year struggling with trial, and rendering to him all the kind offices of faithful love, making us realize the truth of the poet's picture:—

"Though grief may blight, or sin deface
Our youth's fair promise, or disgrace
May brand with infamy and shame,
And public scorn, our blasted name—

Though all the fell contagion fly,
Of guilt, reproach, and misery:
When love rejects, and friends forsake,
A mother, though her heart may break,
From that fond heart will never tear
The child whose last retreat is there."

With this fidelity to the misguided she dies—but alas! in heaven it forsakes her. The guilty wretch has no pleading mother there—her ministries of compassion are ended—the mother's heart died with the body—she has forgotten him. O what a thought! Does it honor the mother—does it honor God—does it honor the scripture views of heaven—does it honor the wisdom and goodness of God in the influences of the future life? In heaven, we would believe, the human heart learns to love more—to pray better—to plead for the erring and sinful. That there it gains from the angels more sympathy for the guilty, and desires more to minister to their necessities. That there it understands better the miseries of sin—the loss of good by sinning, and the deplorableness of the sinner's life. To take these thoughts of heaven away, is to deprive us of the idea that heaven is the very sanctuary of sympathy, and cause us to doubt the sincerity of the declared interest of angels in the happiness of mortals. Our hearts must indeed be changed—not, Oh no! not for the better, but for the worse, for is not the law eternal which declares—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself?" and is it not true—

"Our neighbor is the suffering man,
Though at the fatherest pole?"

Who would not plead and pray against such a change! Who can contemplate it with satisfaction! Who can feel that it is worthy of the God of infinite love!

"I'd spurn the gift of an angel's wing,
If love were not also given."

The doctrine we are examining, straitens the spirit of God and denies that heaven is a world of the purest and widest sympathy, and thereby proves that it is not a doctrine of divine truth. It regards the blessed inhabitants of heaven as unlike Jesus Christ; for who could ask the departed to possess more sympathy than he possesses? And yet one of the descriptions of the glory of the beatified state is that of a change into the moral likeness of Christ.

He is, however, the Image of the Resurrection Life. He was the good—he entered heaven; were the memories that connected him with the sinful blotted out from the mind? Alas! if they were. A revelation to that effect were more awful than any voice of terrible prophecy; for it would take away the glory of his Mediation, and on the page of holy writ could not have been written, as is written, that he is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, in his priestly and mediatorial office.*

Christ Jesus passed into the holy of holies, an high priest taught by suffering to feel for humanity, and remembering from experience the sorrows of mortal life. The excellence of his character on high is, that he can feel for all, that he pleads

* Heb. xiii. 7, 8.

for all, that he exerts delegated power to redeem all. He came into our world to save sinners—he died for sinners—he reigns the advocate of sinners; and to deny that he will completely destroy the power of sin, is to limit the sublime effects of his dominion and lessen the grandeur of the triumphal song of the redeemed. When he took the throne of Mediation, as he did at his ascension from earth, he forgot not the evil ones to whom he was related on earth. There was one who was educated after the customs of the straitest sect of the Pharisees, under the care of Gamaliel, a famous teacher of the law, and through the influence of his parents, teachers, and surrounding associations, the young man Saul was very zealous for all that pertained to the Mosaic economy, according to the interpretations of the reputed wisdom of the age. He was just entering manhood when the Savior's ministry startled and moved the world, and was every way fitted to be a determined and bitter enemy of the Son of God; filled as he was with the learning of his time and the pride of ancestry and Jewish privileges. So distinguished was he in his opposition, that a record is given that at the stoning of the martyr Stephen he took care of the clothes of the murderers. From this time he increased in bitterness towards the disciples—forcibly entering houses and dragging forth men and women as victims for the prison. Was he—this hating Saul, forgotten by the Savior? When Christ entered heaven he knew him—there he was not blotted out from his memory, but when Saul was full of vengeance, speeding his way to Damascus, to imprison all who confessed Jesus as Master,

he was arrested by a voice from heaven—"Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" It was the voice of Jesus—one who knew him, and knew it was a hard work for him to pursue the course he had pursued; and when that one spake, the voice entered the soul of Saul, and "I am Jesus of Nazareth!" woke up thoughts and feelings too powerful for utterance. He yielded himself a captive to the power of that voice of love. And throughout the whole history of the Apostle Paul, we find the most grateful allusions to the sympathy and compassion of Jesus in that act, which show that Jesus had known all that he had been —all his hatred and malice, and yet, instead of turning thunderbolts of immortal vengeance towards him, he had spoken kindly and graciously. The sympathy then manifested by our Lord, was always used by Paul as a persuasive in favor of belief in his unlimited compassion.

And he that has not that belief, has not understood why Jesus is the one altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousand. The reason resides in that unbounded sympathy, by which he is the tender and merciful high priest of sinful humanity. It is that which encircles him with the perfection of beauty, and he who describes him as thus enrobed, can use with justness the poet's words,—

> "When strangers stand and hear me tell
> What beauties in my Savior dwell,
> Where he is gone they fain would know,
> That they might seek and love him too."

When we proclaim our belief in the Oneness and Indivisibility of the Divine Mind, in opposi-

tion to the Trinity of the Godhead, we are accused of doing violence to the dignity of the Savior, inasmuch as we deny his proper Divinity. But, while we assert that we ascribe to him all the dignity of nature he ever claimed, we honor him by maintaining a divinity of character, far surpassing that ascribed to him by the doctrines which are attached to the Trinity, and have grown out of it. We ascribe to him the divinity of perfect, unalterable, and eternal sympathy for man—man, individual; man, universal. To deny him this and substitute an exaltation in name to equality with the very and sovereign God, is not wisdom owned in heaven. Our ascription of character will make a divinity more loved than theirs, even as an active Howard is more honored in the heart, than an exalted Alexander. Jesus is a mirror of God. In his face the glory of God shines. His character is the Image of God. And when we ascribe to him perfect and unalterable sympathy for man, we give unto God the glory due unto his name. The greater loveliness we see in the Image, the more do we discover the beauty of God; and the more we understand the tenderness of Jesus, the more we shall know of the mercifulness of the dealings of the Almighty. And it is the knowledge of these by which we are made to know the characters borne by the inhabitants of heaven. There, as on earth, we shall be called to imitate God; and our hope, if a scriptural one, is, that there we shall be like Jesus in sympathy and love—changed from one degree of this glory to another, retaining, as he did, our interest in those we knew and associated

with in this life. And O not in despair shall the erring question the departed good—

> "Shalt thou not teach me in that calmer home
> The wisdom that I learned so ill in this—
> The wisdom that is love,—till I become
> Thy fit companion in that land of bliss?"

Let us trust—let us trust in the sympathy of the departed. Let us believe that there, as here, the good watch over the interests of our race, pitying the misguided, and compassionating the deeply guilty. Let us reject the thought that heaven is the home of selfishness—that he who wept at the thought of earthly evil coming upon his foes, will condemn any to endless despair, to wail and suffer; but rather let us honor him with the name he loved on earth—the sinner's Friend! He knows what sin is, and he knows what high capabilities man has to become holy; and as he loves our race—as he loves the honor of the Father—as he loves to spread abroad blessings and felicity, he will work in the Regeneration till all are brought home, and then, *then* his rest shall be glorious, glorious!

And shall we not learn of him? shall his great and touching lessons of sympathy be lost upon us? O, in the name of God, let the answer of our hearts and lives be—No! Let the love of Christ constrain us to love our race. If we aspire after greatness, let it be his greatness. If we seek for honor, let it be his honor. If we labor for a name, let it be his name—the name, the honor, the greatness of goodness—the issue of active sympathy with and for man!

The vilest may yet become an angel. Let us

recognise in the sinner the divine spirit that is not all dead even in the most abandoned; for as the rock in the desert, when touched by Moses, gave out the delicious streams, so from the most hardened heart will flow the sweetest affections, when it shall be touched by the ordination of God—the Moses of his purpose and will. Despise none created in the image of humanity. Give none up as utterly lost. Have faith and trust; work and pray. And though the wickedness of men should crucify thee, fellow mortal! seek the aid of God to bear all, and pray in sympathy for them, as thy Master did for his murderers—"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!"

"They know not what they do," is indeed true of every sinner. The iniquitous know not that they war against their own good—their own happiness, in pursuing the evil course. God pities them—Christ pities them—Angels pity them—the purified and blest pity them—and who art thou that opposeth all heaven with thy scorn? Who would bar the doors of heaven eternally against millions? Thou art a sinner—a grievous sinner! deny it. if thou canst, when thou rememberest the eternal law—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself!"—O what sympathy is therein required! How much do we come short of the glory of God in obedience! Let us pray for more light—more strength—more disinterestedness—more of our Master's love! Quicken us, O God, according to thy truth—thy truth is Love! Let us feel that the beauty of our Master's life on earth was the revealment of eternal loveliness, and make us true to its spirit.

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